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Notes of the Week

THE Conservative prospects are improving every day. That small section of the independent Press which at first was doubtful in its support of Mr. Baldwin is now definitely coming to his side—as well it might, considering the straightforward ability with which he has placed the issue before the country, and the alternatives to it which the united Opposition is able to offer. All the great guns on either side are now in action, and the barrage of howitzer fire from the allied Liberal batteries is heavy and continuous. But we predict that when the curtain is lifted the casualties will not be so heavy as the noise might suggest. On another page, in a review dealing with the Battle of Jutland, we show of how little avail good shooting is with "dud" ammunition. The old Cobdenite powder makes a lot of smoke, but its impulsive and penetrating power is extremely low.

A LIBERAL PLAN?

The Liberals are flooding the constituencies with candidates, the great majority of whom have little chance of election. What is the plan behind this prolixity? It seems probable that their plan is to try to obtain by this means—and even at the expense of letting many Unionists in by splitting the "progressive" vote—a majority, not of members, but of actual votes cast, over the figures of either of the other parties. This accomplished, they would press in the new parliament for electoral reform, claiming that though they had a minority in parliament, that minority represented a majority of the electorate. Mr. Churchill's speech at Manchester seemed to hint at some such scheme; but the country is unlikely to accept the complicated methods of proportional representation.

THE OLD COMRADES

Mr. Baldwin's Queen's Hall speech on Monday was a fine, spirited affair and gave a Roland for Mr. Lloyd George's Oliver with something to spare. Mr. Lloyd George's Limehouse tactics must already have done much harm to the Liberal cause among serious-minded people. Mr. Baldwin spoke the simple truth when he

said that the electorate to-day expect something more than second-rate frivolity and that they have ceased to trust Mr. George. Mr. George's reply two days later was merely a reiteration of abuse. Despite his dowry, the Asquithian branch of the "United Liberal Party" must view his return to the fold with mixed feelings. He is not an unmitigated asset, and there is not, we venture to think, so unqualified a "great gladness of old comrades" in the camp as Sir Alfred Mond has hastily asserted.

SOCIALIST METAPHORS

Seldom, even in electioneering literature, have we come upon such a mass of false analogies and irrelevant imagery as we find in the 'Call' which the Independent Labour Party has issued to its members. For a random sample, the unwillingness of workers to toil for their employer's private benefit is likened to that of soldiers to fight for their commander's private gain. As if there were any true parallel between an employer who will earn nothing if his business yields no profits, and a military leader who is debarred from loot precisely because he is paid; or between gross profits which go largely to payment of wages, and plunder which the individual alone would enjoy! We must credit the leaders of the Independent Labour Party with knowledge of the mental capacity of its members, but if this kind of stuff be really to the popular taste popular education has so far been a failure.

PARTY SOLIDARITY

Liberals may be united at Abingdon Street, but the flats are badly joined in some of the constituencies. Cardiganshire has rival Liberals, and there is internecine strife in Ross and Cromarty, Western Isles, Moray and Nairn, Berwick and Haddington, Roxburgh and Selkirk. If Conservatives may take heart of grace at these family quarrels they must look also to their own household, where the main issue of Conservatism *versus* Socialism is here and there being obscured by pettifogging personalities. We can add nothing to the unanswerable plea for party solidarity made by the Editor in his 'Pilgrim's Progress' in this issue. When it is realized that thirteen Conservatives are standing in this election as Free Traders

—a number which might become doubled in Parliament in an adverse vote on a Tariff Bill—there can be no room left for doubt that the only hope for undisputed victory at the polls is absolute unity and discipline.

ANALYSIS OF THE PRESS

Conservatives began the campaign with a bad Press. It is still bad, but is improving. An analysis of the principal London Press shows that only four journals are wholeheartedly behind Mr. Baldwin, while ten are wholeheartedly against him. These are:

FOR:	AGAINST:
<i>The Times</i>	<i>Westminster Gazette</i>
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	<i>Daily Mail</i>
<i>Morning Post</i>	<i>Daily Chronicle</i>
<i>Saturday Review</i>	<i>Daily News</i>
	<i>Daily Herald</i>
	<i>Evening News</i>
	<i>Star</i>
	<i>Nation</i>
	<i>New Statesman</i>
	<i>Outlook</i>

A number of papers, including the *Spectator*, *Daily Express*, *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Mirror*, and *Daily Sketch*, are Laodicean in attitude, or else non-committal. The London evening Press is no better; nor is the Sunday Press. It therefore behoves Conservatives to make every possible effort on the platform and on the hoardings.

COLD FEET AND COLD FACT

The lukewarm Press grows more favourable to the Conservative programme as that programme is more fully expounded. The alternatives to Conservatism are in the one case negative and in the other disastrous to the credit of the country. But one group of so-called Conservative papers has found a cause of complaint against Mr. Baldwin in his conduct of the Anglo-French negotiations. This group complains—as it has done all along—not that his foreign policy is unfair to Britain but that it is unfair to France. It puts France first because France is the better armed. It is obsessed with the threat of conscription and a new war; it trembles at the thought of an air-swoop on London. But British electors never yet have failed to do their duty on the plea of foreign intimidation.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S STATISTICS

We would allow all speakers in the present campaign some latitude when quoting figures of trade, but we find it intolerable that Mr. Lloyd George should set up his defence on complete perversion of statistical facts. He asked at Northampton why "we are selling less to India" than before the war. Now the truth is that we are selling very much more—so much more that never in all our history have we supplied any country, inside the Empire or out of it, with goods of anything like the value of our exports of manufactured and part-manufactured articles to India. The increase has been from about £67 millions to £104 millions. Mr. Lloyd George converts this into a decrease, mourns over it, uses it as the text for a discourse on the errors of his opponents. For combined ignorance and impudence this turning upside down of fact must be unbeaten even in Mr. Lloyd George's own remarkable record.

"AN ACTIVE FORM OF FREE TRADE"

Lord Robert Cecil, whose orthodoxy as a Free Trader is above suspicion, and whose knowledge of the historical and contemporary arguments for Free Trade is not surpassed by that of any Cobdenite pundit, has rendered a quiet service to clear thinking on the fiscal question. He has shown that even attachment to the theory of Free Trade need not involve hostility to the Baldwin policy, for a tariff is not only a means of protection but an instrument of negotiation, and may well be used to bring about the lowering of a foreign tariff hostile to this country. When so used,

it is, as he calls it, an active form of Free Trade. The defining term is more novel than the reasoning which justifies it, but that reasoning has hitherto been heard from old-style Tariff Reformers rather than from Free Traders, and Lord Robert Cecil's use of it should do much to steady voters whose Conservatism is troubled by fiscal doubts. They may be assured that no responsible Conservative leader is Protectionist for the love of Protection. The changes contemplated are inspired not by fanaticism but by expediency, and may so check the development of tariff abroad as to reduce rather than increase the amount of Protection in the world.

A POINT FOR CANDIDATES

A point which Conservative candidates might well keep prominent with regard to the Capital Levy is that the present system of taxation is doing scientifically what the Capital Levy, as conceived by the Socialists, would attempt to do so crudely as to be virtually unworkable. That is to say, the present scale of taxation is such that people are already obliged to realize their securities in order to pay their income tax; and although the strain in the case of industries is almost intolerable, this system does represent the utmost that can be achieved by the transference of capital from the individual to the State as a great emergency measure. Opponents of the Capital Levy are, in fact, contributing their capital at this moment to the State; but the process, instead of being a violent and destructive one, is being scientifically applied, and a revolution at least as great as anything dreamed of by people of the "smash everything" school is steadily going on before our eyes.

DE PROFUNDIS

The portrait of Mr. Lloyd George, long incarcerated in the cellars of the National Liberal Club, is to be taken from its confinement and hung. There may be a mordant prophecy in this action quite out of line with the intentions of those who have decreed the re-emergence of the picture; but we prefer to take it as a rather pleasing symbol of the variety of tricks, including levitation and the vanishing trick, contained in the Wizard's box. He who left New York prepared, as we believe, to preach Protection and the Empire, arrives in London with the gospel of Free Trade upon his lips; he who was despised and rejected even of the National Liberal Club, and in effigy confined in a dungeon, has partaken of a joyful resurrection, and sits now at Mr. Asquith's right hand. It is a dangerous position—for Mr. Asquith.

CANADA AND PROTECTION

After a short visit to France Mr. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Premier, has returned to London. Naturally he will take no part in our electoral struggle because of his position, but it is rather a pity. He is the leader of the Liberal Party in the Dominion, and a descendant of Mr. Mackenzie, the great opponent of Sir John Macdonald who gave Canada her protective tariff despite Mr. Mackenzie's prediction that that fiscal policy would prove the ruin of the country. Of course, it did not prove the ruin of the country; on the contrary, Canada owed her prosperity to it. So clearly was this the case that the Liberals, notwithstanding their perfervid denunciations of Protection, never dreamed of making any important reduction of the tariff, far less of abolishing it. The same is true to-day. Therefore we say it is a pity that Mr. King cannot put all this before our people. But this should be all the more reason why, let us say, Lord Beaverbrook, who is well acquainted with Canadian fiscal history, should do so.

FOR WHOM TO VOTE?

No one can deny that the Franco-German controversy and the relation of Britain to it dominate the foreign situation, but it has been reserved for the *Daily Mail* to assert that they also dominate our domestic political

situation, virtually to the exclusion of everything else. The French obsession from which this newspaper increasingly suffers finds expression now in the sentence: "A vote for the Baldwin Government means a vote for quarrelling with France and breaking with her." This can only mean, "Don't vote Conservative!" For whom, then, are the readers of the *Daily Mail* to vote? Not certainly for the Liberals or the Socialists, for both are far more widely opposed to the policy of France than is Mr. Baldwin, who maintains that he is doing his best to keep the Entente alive, notwithstanding the frightful difficulty of the effort because of the intransigence of M. Poincaré. This kind of thing may be light, but it is not leading.

THE ENTENTE STILL EXISTS

With the agreement of the Allies on the Notes to be sent to Germany regarding the presence of the ex-Crown Prince in that country and, what is much more important, the Commission of Military Control, another dangerously sharp corner has been turned in safety and the Entente, though shaken, has not been shattered. Speaking generally, M. Poincaré, after a great deal of debate, has seen fit to meet the views of our Government, which regarded the return of the ex-Crown Prince as lacking special significance, and considered the pressing of the Control inexpedient, if not unwise and unnecessarily provocative, in the present distracted condition of Germany. So far, good. The French, however, are not precluded from taking an independent line in the near future. But what has been made clear is that if they do so Britain maintains that they will be going against the undertaking given by France at San Remo not to act on her own initiative. Another point to note is that M. Poincaré is not yet prepared to wreck the Entente altogether.

IN THE BALANCE

Dr. Stresemann still contrives to remain in power and to keep the Reich from disintegration. He has again met the Reichstag—with what result it is impossible to predict, but the salient feature of the session is the pronounced opposition to him of the Communists, who are said, probably with truth, to be acting under the orders of Moscow. For the moment everything would seem to depend on whether or not Dr. Stresemann can survive any longer the determined hostility of the Socialists and the Extreme Left in addition to that of the parties of the Right, including some members of his own party—the Industrialist. At the bottom of the continuing political crisis lies the constant worsening of the economic situation in the absence of real money and in the growing misery of all classes of the German people except the very richest. The experiment of issuing "Rentenmarks" in place of the worthless marks does not look like a success. As regards the Ruhr, it is plain that its "productivity" is not increasing, for France is now offering further concessions to its magnates to induce them to work with her.

THE KING OF SPAIN'S VISIT TO ROME

King Alfonso's Italian visit is interesting, not only because of the pomp and glamour which attend his presence in the Eternal City, but also owing to the possibilities with which the occasion is fraught. Spain's aloofness from the international field has almost become a tradition, and the fact that the present cordiality towards Italy originated during the last period of the former régime and that it is one of the few surviving policies to be adopted by the Military Directory which now governs the nation, is a sure sign that the feeling finds its source in something deeper than the spur of the moment. Spanish isolation cannot continue indefinitely; the interests common to both countries in the Western Mediterranean and in Latin-America, where the influence of the United States increases daily, are strong enough to justify the present movement. It

should not be forgotten, besides, that since the extinction of the Austrian Empire His Catholic Majesty is the most important monarch under the Holy See, and the solemnity of his reception at the Vatican is significant as well as impressive. Meanwhile, Italy and Spain have signed at Madrid a Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, putting an end to the existing *modus vivendi* and granting specially favourable terms to their respective goods. Italy will now permit the annual importation of three million litres of Spanish wine, and a Commission of experts will regulate the exchange of raw materials and fix the conditions under which Spanish coal may be imported.

AN INDIAN ELECTION

The Indian Constitutionalists—those who are good enough to use the machinery set up by the reforms, though to their own ends—have had a sad set back. Their leader, Mr. S. R. Das, not to be confused with the extremist Mr. C. R. Das, has been defeated in Bengal. This defeat was seen from the first to be fairly likely, but his opponents, the Non-Cooperators, ingeniously ensured it by tricking some of his supporters into a fleet of motors and driving them into rural Bengal, far from the polling stations. French India has known election tactics even more decisive of the result, as when at Pondichéry one party ran away with the voting urns; but Bengal is clearly creeping up, and though giving sorrow-rides to hostile voters is hardly the highest kind of political generalship, we record it in the absence of any other sort of political progress in India.

THE BOILERMAKERS' PEACE

At long last the boilermakers have arrived at a kind of peace with their comrades and their employers. As the quarrel was utterly without justification, so the negotiations have been without grace. Every opportunity has been taken to delay the really decisive step, and in face of the strongest representations of the moral and material impossibility of their position from reputable Labour leaders, the boilermakers have protracted argument while their fellow-workers suffered and great industries were paralyzed. There are many morals in the history of this wanton dispute, but we will point only one, which is pertinent at election time. If the united forces of Labour take so many weeks to bring a small refractory body of workers to their senses, what hope can there be of any greater peace in industry under a Labour Government? We are told that industrial trouble comes from Capitalist victimization of Labour. Here is an instance in which a small section of Labour deliberately and for weeks injured Labour in general, the sense of community of interest proving powerless to restrain its selfish action.

THE FARMER'S CHOICE

Both the farmers and the farm labourers have now before them the manifestos of the Conservative, the Liberal, and the Socialist Parties, and we think they can have no difficulty in seeing where their interest lies. There is nothing indefinite about the Conservative programme for the aid of the much-suffering agricultural industry; it is stated in plain terms which anybody can understand, and everybody knows that, if Mr. Baldwin is returned to power, it will be carried out. The Liberal agricultural programme is full, characteristically enough, of the most wonderful promises—which might, or might not, be fulfilled. But when did the Liberals ever do anything for the farmers? What value can be attached to their belated discovery that British agriculture needs "special consideration"? Nor will the farmers find much that is satisfying in the Socialist agricultural programme. We wonder what kind of sense a man who has bought his farm sees in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's proposal "to restore to the people their lost rights in the land"? Well, there is the tangible, practical Conservative programme, and it is bound to have its due effect.

A GENEROUS GIFT

The gift of £75,000 by Sir Edward Hulton to the members of the staffs of his old newspapers is the kind of generosity that typifies the comradeship which may exist behind the noise and competition of modern journalism, and shows that even "Press combines" need not be soulless. As a matter of fact, the personal generosity of the newspaper proprietor towards his employees is not by any means foreign to Fleet Street; Lord Northcliffe, who had a certain reputation for ruthlessness, paid the expenses of more than one employee for a prolonged holiday abroad; and Lord Burnham and his father before him have always cared for those who worked for them. Sir Edward's munificence is on a very splendid scale; it is simply a most efficacious and generous way of saying "Thank you," and as such is sure to be warmly applauded.

THE MORLEY PAPERS

Lord Morley was not only the intimate friend of the chief Liberal statesmen of his age; he was the associate of Meredith and of Swinburne and of very many other Victorian writers; and the strict prohibition his will puts on the use of his papers denies us knowledge of a good deal that both the historian and the literary critic would wish to know. But on the whole we must approve of his action. It discourages the appetite for recent gossip, without excluding the possibility of revelation to some later age, for he has not ordered the destruction of his papers. And gossip is most useful when it is old, when its appreciation calls for an imaginative sense of its indiscretion like that of Munro, who used to lower his voice as he quoted the vices of the Cæsars. It is true that small beer will not survive such keeping, but we will hope, for posterity's sake, that Lord Morley laid down some of the port of reminiscence.

A SIMPLE DISH

An agreeable chance the other day brought before us again a simple delicacy we had almost forgotten, that cheese tart known as *Guiche*, and we could but wonder why it is not commoner on tables. It requires but some paste cooked in a lively oven for about twenty minutes and then filled with a mixture of Gruyère cheese, beaten egg and cream, after which the tart spends another quarter of an hour in the oven. There are those who think to improve this admirable tart by scattering over its surface small pieces of bacon, but such are given to the erroneous belief that things good separately will be good together. The tart needs no garnish.

WHICH EDEN?

THE election is on us like a thief in the night, and clearheadedness in the tangle is imperative. The danger is that befogged voters may be apathetic. We are put to an unnatural choice—that between the protection of home manufactures, and the confiscation of private capital. These alternatives are no more on the same plane than addition and subtraction, fertilizers and aeroplanes, business and burglary. Their artificial conjunction is due to those accidents of the last election which turned a fictitious Labour Party into the official opposition. Otherwise, surely, we should have been asked to choose between some form of Fair Trade and some phase of Free Trade. For many years the Liberal Party has failed to perceive that both these fiscal expedients are means, not ends, and can well be combined to suit transforming emergencies. England is an island nourished on imported necessities that she cannot afford to tax; which, through war, strikes, and the Labour Party's impediments, is gravely crippled. All the stale old arguments are phantoms; but phantoms, none the less, which it would be madness to ignore. As regards our staple manufactures, we are now one of those "new" countries for which Mill himself demanded protective tariffs. Unem-

ployment, due to many contributing causes, stares us in the face, and we certainly need at the very least reciprocal commercial treaties. We are handicapped all round. Yet we are forced into the Gilbertian dilemma of standing between the ironies of the incongruous. Free Trade depends on free markets, and unrestricted competition is incompatible with contracted commerce. Mr. Baldwin has expressly disclaimed any manufacture of millenniums. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald propounds a vague panacea, worked from abroad. It is as much enveloped in extraneous mists as those whereby the Homeric deities delivered their heroes. But his cloud is not one of witnesses: it is a mirage. On October 13, 1917, these columns contained an article on the Co-scription of Capital, exposing the flimsiness of its pretexts, the injustice of its intentions and the bankruptcies of its bearings. Here we can do little more than attempt a brief contrast between the two Edens which are being dangled before the gaze of the fallen.

Even presuming, against facts, that unlimited competition has proved an unmixed blessing, can it be denied that home protection stimulates production and, with it, employment? It makes for national wealth and industrial content, for we could not be undersold from abroad. If foreign exports were subject to a tariff, alien imposts would be lowered, and imperial products might eventually prove self-sufficing. Our markets would be enlarged, and, as gold follows goods, the exchanges would gradually mend. But the Labour Party, by tyrannies at home and conspiracies abroad, by insensate dictates that seem bent on precluding industry, are incapacitating export and have fabricated unemployment. The Premier's limited Eden is at least English and not a Paradise Lost to favour alien interests. "I stand for England" is his motto. The manufacture of clothes proved the firstfruits of the Fall in an Eden of lethargy. Our first parents were never taught any division of labour, and the Serpent who cajoled them by doles of refreshing fruit was too clever to impart the secret. They lost a listless immortality by a strike against discipline, which, like most strikes, brought them nothing by labour without leadership. Moreover, envy caused Cain to murder Abel. Mr. Baldwin's Eden recognizes the power of production kindled by kinship and not enslaved by the secret societies.

What is Mr. MacDonald's Eden? It is at once a sterilizer of industry and an almshouse with a door opening on a cemetery. The mere transference of cash from one pocket to another is certainly not wealth, and if the plunder be lavished in doles and on bureaucracy, perpetual unemployment will ensue. The Labour Party's scale of Capital Levy has at length been issued. It varies from 10 to 50 per cent., but the bitterest burden falls on moderate fortunes. The millionaire will have half a million left for enterprise choked by fresh spoliation. It is pretended that the proceeds will be devoted to the extinction of the National Debt, our best instrument of credit, a credit upheld by the very victims who now defray most of its cost. What altruism, and what nonsense! For, quite apart from this purpose being impracticable under the panic-depreciations that must ensue, the paralytic stroke would not end there. We are told nothing about subsequent taxation; but we are vouchsafed a glimpse about rates in the shape of improved "facilities" for municipal bodies. Poplar will be universal. Not a word of private trusts, though public companies are to be franked. Of course they must be, otherwise the absorbing Government would have to levy on themselves. And since securities are to be accepted in lieu of money, that Socialist Government would pouch the premiums on such as are redeemable. Land is to be "restored," and very soon the banks with other industries would be nationalized. It is notorious that no Government has yet organized industry in this country either with profit or advantage. "Oh! sacred simplicity"!

The proposed scale is backed by the name of that economic expert Mr. Pethick Lawrence, which recalls Disraeli's "and is England to be governed by Popkin's plan"? What a killing cure for an unemployment which the Labour Party have largely created! How degrading for labour to exist by sufferance of Soviet Communists, without a loophole for rescue but revolt; and how idealistic is the suicidal scheme hatched by geese who can neither lay golden eggs, nor save any capital by their cackle! In such an Eden we should advise the working-man to buy pocketless trousers. It is no Eden, but a Tophet. Walk up ladies and gentlemen! pay your money and take your choice—before you are left without money for payment, or any choice of action!

PRAYER BOOK SETTLEMENT

BY agreeing to allow the use of two alternative canons to the existing Office of the Holy Communion the House of Clergy has at any rate moved towards a peaceful settlement, though the crucial question as to what authority in a parish shall decide the choice between different canons may raise much controversy. It has also made it extremely unlikely that any of the various coloured books, green, grey, or yellow, will be adopted either for alternative or substituted use. There will be but one Prayer Book, though it may and probably will contain alternative canons in the Holy Communion Office. It is at any rate something gained that there will be no new Prayer Book authorized in substitution for the old one; for that may be regarded as more or less settled. The plan now "generally approved" (which means not negated) by the House of Clergy does not mean any very great change except to those Evangelicals, such as the Dean of Canterbury and Sir Thomas Inskip, who will not admit that the formulæ of the Communion Office, especially the Prayer of Consecration, may be construed in any other way than their own. Necessarily in that view the alternative canons recognize doctrine which should be excluded as inadmissible. But these intransigents are not very numerous, not nearly so numerous as their zeal or self-assertion would suggest.

The great body of English Churchmen, including the Evangelicals, are quite aware that many of the doctrinal formulæ of the Prayer Book, not excluding the Articles of Religion, can be, and always have been, construed in more than one way. They know that it is historically certain, or at any rate much more than probable, that they were purposely so drawn that they might cover different views, or perhaps it would be better to say different emphases. To them the only doctrinal change resulting from allowing the alternative canons will be that views hitherto regarded by one group of Churchmen as at least implicit in the existing Communion Office will now in the new canon be explicit. Obviously such a change cannot involve any matter of fundamental principle. Yet it is not quite a mere matter of verbal definition either to Evangelicals or High Churchmen. Hitherto High Churchmen have had to accept the unpleasant position that a large number of their fellow Churchmen did not regard views which to them were vital as covered by the Prayer Book formulæ at all. This will not be possible any longer if the alternative canons are authorized. To Evangelicals, on the other hand, the change does involve a small sacrifice. While admitting that sacramental views with which they do not agree are not excluded by the old Communion Office, they will naturally not be glad that these views should be made explicit instead of implicit in any authorized Anglican formulæ. It was to their honour that they were willing for the common good to acquiesce in a settlement that lost them a certain controversial advantage. Perhaps this is rather a grudging way of putting the case. It might be more correct to say of the main body of Evangelicals, who are reasonable and not intolerant, that a

change could not be pleasant to them which strengthened the position of theological tenets which they viewed with misgiving. No one can blame them for that. On the other hand the new plan makes for clearness and perhaps for honesty. It more plainly brings out the facts, whatever the result may be. That divergent views, not necessarily contradictory, are held by different groups of English Churchmen is, and always has been, a fact, though not a patent fact. The appeal to one common form as evidence of Anglican unity was always possible, and up to a point quite admissible; but carried beyond that point it was hardly, at any rate not transparently, honest. The alternative canons would remove any danger of such dishonesty, whether in the form of self-deception or otherwise.

If the Prayer Book must be meddled with at all, we should say that what the House of Clergy "approved" is probably as good a settlement as could be reached. In fact, were the average English Churchman a theologian (which God forbid), or even well-versed in Church matters, the introduction of the permissible canons might be a net gain; though it could never be an unqualified gain. It is a rather painful confession of weakness, and not the less painful for being an admission of fact, that the Anglican Communion should speak with two or more voices. Not that it entitles other branches of the Church Universal to throw stones at us. They may speak with one voice, but they think with many minds. A much more serious aspect of the matter is the possible effect on the ordinary plain Churchman, who has known his Prayer Book and never concerned himself with Church controversies. What will he make of the three canons? Will he not be mystified? If he tries to understand differences he has never perceived, in deciding which formulæ he would prefer, will he be edified? Is there not on the contrary a real danger of his being put off? We still see no reason to change our view that it would have been better on balance not to raise the question of Prayer Book Revision at all. But it has been raised and revision there will be, though of course it is not at all certain that it will be on the lines agreed by the House of Clergy. They are but one of three houses. The National Assembly has not yet decided anything. We are still at the beginning of a long story.

More significant to our mind than what they agreed on was the fact that the House of Clergy did agree. A short time ago agreement on anything seemed impossible. Every group was intent only on destroying every other group. The zealots seemed to be getting the upper hand; no quarter was the order of the day; and the Church, if it could, seemed likely to go down in the general confusion. But when the critical moment came, a new spirit, born of the solemnity of the issue, came over the whole house. The desire to agree took the place of the desire to differ; and, as usual, when men of good will want to agree they find they can.

A Pilgrim's Progress

London, November 22

I CANNOT think that Lord Balfour set a very good example to his fellow Conservatives in his speech at the luncheon party given in honour of Lord Birkenhead at the Constitutional Club. To ordinary loyal Conservatives, conscious of the really serious issue which is before the country, and aware of the importance of unity in the ranks of the Party, the whole circumstances of this luncheon were not a little puzzling and disturbing. The moment when a ship is going into action is not the moment selected by junior officers to pay one another ceremonial compliments with a pointed ignoring of the captain of the ship. It seems to me that these eminent politicians, instead of making speeches to one another at that luncheon, would have been better engaged in the country urging upon the

electors the importance of closing the ranks and going forward against the common enemy. The impression upon the ordinary onlooker made by the proceedings at this party was that while Lord Derby, Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Birkenhead and others intended loyally to support Mr. Baldwin at the election, they reserved the right to form some separate group of their own afterwards; that if he were successful they would stick to him, but if he was not they would forsake him. This is not a very happy fighting spirit; it is not a very good example of loyalty; it is not the frame of mind in which to go into battle.

* * *

What has been very obvious, certainly on the social side of London political life, is that eighteen years' absence from office is not conducive to the maintenance of discipline in the Party ranks. Conservatives have too recently broken away from coalition and resumed their separate existence as a party to have found again that spirit of unity and *camaraderie* that is essential to any fighting force. We are always praying for somebody who will take responsibility; Mr. Baldwin took responsibility when he decided to go to the country; and it becomes the duty of every Conservative who cares for the things for which Conservatism stands to support him immediately and without question. There is a rule in the King's Regulations governing the Navy which requires every subordinate to obey any order given him by a superior "instantly and cheerfully." I have often thought what a wholesome effect it would have on ordinary civilian life if such a law could be enforced, and if sullenness or unwillingness in the execution of an order could be regarded as equal to disobedience! Because it is not nearly so much what is done as the spirit in which it is done that matters; and what matters in the Election is that every one who cares for the preservation of England and the Empire against the disintegrating influence of either untried theories or avowed wrecking, should support the head of the one political organization which at present stands for that preservation.

* * *

Conservatives as a whole are not nearly grateful enough for what they have got, or sufficiently alive to the necessity of insuring it. "What I have, I hold," is not always true. "What I have will be taken away from me if I do not fight for and justify my possession of it," may be much more true. Propaganda is insurance, and an independent Conservative Press is the kind of propaganda that is at this moment most needed in the country. Half of the working-man's support of extreme Socialist programmes is due not to any desire on his part to wreck things, but to ignorance of facts concerning the social and economic structure. The Socialists have worked magnificently in educating the working classes in their own particular tenets; Liberalism, in spite of its recent state of disintegration, has a splendid Press, and has produced by far the majority of the best journalists in England. Conservatism has a weak Press, which it supports badly; and yet it expects the bewildered voter, thundered at and beseeched, preached to, advertised at and coaxed, with the most talented and convincing eloquence, to vote solidly and steadily for a cause which he instinctively feels to be right, but about which he hears much more *contra* than *pro*. There is far less intellectual community in Conservatism than there is in Liberalism; all of which is very bad, and will be paid for, unless it be remedied, by a loss of votes and support in the country. The ostrich is a very noble bird, and his method of dealing with a storm may be conducive to his own comfort, but it is not very inspiring to his fellows. To stick one's head in the sand and turn one's back to the danger is certainly a way of avoiding the sight of many unpleasant things; but it does not avert the danger. And if men prominent in the most powerful party in the country continue to play the ostrich, they run the risk of being awakened, as Carlyle put it, in a terrible *a posteriori* manner.

The Prime Minister's quiet assurance in taking the responsibility of his own decisions and going calmly forward on the course that he believes to be right, ought to be an inspiration to every Conservative to work and fight under his banner with unquestioning loyalty. In the hour of battle one's private theories as to what one would do oneself if one were in the position of one's commander cease to have any value; they become indeed reprehensible and are almost mutinous. The return to the party system must mean a return to party loyalty; otherwise there is no meaning in a party at all. With some of us taking our hats off to France and saying that French interests must come before home interests, and others taking their hats off to Russia and the most abominable kind of anarchy; one group invoking the shade of Cobden and another that of Joseph Chamberlain, it is the duty of Conservatives at this particular moment to reserve their salutes for their leader, their fidelity for their own country, and their effort for the service of the living and not of the dead. In so far as we do that we shall secure victory; and so far as we fail to do it we shall risk, and deserve, defeat.

FILSON YOUNG

TWO PLATFORM PLAYS

BY IVOR BROWN

Edward II. By Christopher Marlowe. Played on November 18 and 19 at the Regent Theatre.

Our Ostriches. By Dr. Marie Stopes. Royal Court Theatre.

MARLOWE'S 'Edward II' was a considerable contribution to the drama red in tooth and claw. It has brave, barbaric stuff in it. It gave to the groundlings of the day what Webster dispensed so generously later on, namely, the plain, unvarnished visage of physical mutilation. The last act may be summarized as follows. Edward, cornered at last by the rebel barons, is flung into a dungeon which is a castle cess-pool, there to stand knee-deep in filth and stench while drums are beaten to prohibit sleep. At last he is murdered by the curiously complicated device of sandwiching him between a feather-bed and a table and trampling on the table. His murderer is murdered for silence' sake. All this in public. The young king, Edward III, has Mortimer, the chief rebel and his mother's lover, beheaded and places, again in public, the severed head of Mortimer on the coffin of his father, exclaiming with some unction,

Sweet father, here unto thy murdered ghost
I offer up this wicked traitor's head;
And let these tears, distilling from mine eyes,
Be witness of my grief and innocence.

Whereat the actors troop off, head, coffin, and all, and such of the groundlings as considered the ration of blood to have been meagre no doubt went off to the nearest bear-pit, thoughtfully provided for such grumblers by Edward Alleyn, who was also one of Marlowe's chief tragedians. The triumph of Alleyn's career appears to have occurred when he left the stage and became 'Master of the royal game of bears, bulls, and mastiffs,' for which position a thorough grounding in the drama of the roaring fifteen-nineties had obviously provided qualification.

The 'Phoenix' production of 'Edward II' was well worth while, first because it showed that the flowery literary praise heaped on the play by certain literary men is nonsense, and secondly because it revealed the source of public delight in these helter-skelter plays of the platform stage.

The eternal riddle set us by the Elizabethan drama is to discover how it was that the public did not lynch Shakespeare instead of filling his pockets and making him a gentleman. The play-going public of the time were, as we know from contemporary documents, a rough lot. The magistrates of the time talked of the

audiences as their successors might talk of modern race-gangs. Yet these were the patrons of the 'Mermaid' men and they actually allowed Shakespeare to spill quite novel philosophic speeches over the old traditional blood. Nay more, they thanked him for it; it was as though the less reputable patrons of Hurst, Kempton, and Alexandra Parks were also the enthusiasts of the 'Old Vic,' a doubling of parts quite incomprehensible nowadays. What is so difficult for a modern mind to understand is how the Elizabethan audience that was out for so much blood managed to put up with so much poetry.

As far as Marlowe is concerned the answer is fairly simple. The poetry was carried along on a tide of primitive passion that could be understood of any man. The play of 'Edward II' is a prolonged dog-fight between the king's men and the barons. It is a rowdy, rapid, ding-dong business, and even played at a remote distance on the "picture-stage" of the huge Regent Theatre it was quite genuinely exciting with the simple appeal of a rare "dust-up." Picture it on a platform stage with the crowd all around it and you see how it must have stirred men with the excitement of a horse-race or a prize-fight. You had to take sides, just as the disposition of the stage had already divided the audience into sides. You had to hate or pity the King, the Queen, Piers Gaveston, Mortimer, and the rest of them. One pictures the simpler clod-poles of the crowd wanting to mount the stage and give that there Gaveston a bit of their minds and strong right arms. Remember, if you want historic evidence for such direct action, the Citizen and the Citizen's wife in 'The Knight of the Burning Pestle.' The platform stage had its manifest uses in making the clashing wills and swords of Elizabethan drama reverberate in the breasts of solid citizen and sly cut-purse. Play and people were at grips, each quite literally in the midst of life.

The 'Phoenix' players attacked and counter-attacked with right, rare vigour. Marlowe's characters are not subtle, but they are strong, clear, cogent delineations of the various moods they represent. They are most of them war-horses that need to be strongly ridden, and in this connexion Mr. Edmund Willard is particularly to be praised. He drove Mortimer for all the steed was worth and took his fall at the end with a fiery dignity that seemed to be finely in Marlowe's vein. Mr. Thesiger made an interesting effeminate of Gaveston, taking care to keep him well clear of puny futility and bodying him forth as a fop with backbone, one who would not be too contemptible alongside the beevish barons. Mr. Duncan Yarrow's king, played under handicap of an obviously suffocating chill, was eloquent, tender, and moving; the part has not the depth of Shakespeare's 'Richard II,' with which it is so often compared, but it is a big thing within its limitations, and it was done with big courage and address. The queen of Miss Frangçon Davies was a beautifully firm piece of work and as good to look upon as a portrait of the Flemish school. Mr. Wade, the producer, achieved his proper end, which was to make us tremulous, excited partisans, viewing the play like spectators at the ring. In short, he got the platform effect from a "picture" stage.

Turning from ancient to modern we find Dr. Stopes writing also for a stage that were better a platform. Her play, or rather her preachment, is of birth control; by no means inevitably, for she is learned in many themes. 'Our Ostriches' is buttoned up into some sort of dramatic shape, but the body shoots out of the clothes in all directions; there is a wisp of plot which does not matter and a deal of social science which most certainly does. Dr. Stopes introduces us to Mr. Flinker, who proliferates ailing and moribund children in a slum-tenement. It may be urged that this is nobody's affair but Mr. and Mrs. Flinkers'. Whether or no we are morally our brothers' keepers, we are quite certainly their economic sustainers, and society, even though it may successfully put Mrs. Flinker out of

mind, will none the less be itself put out of pocket. The worthy citizen who stints his own holidays to educate his children works and saves with all Flinkerdom upon his back, and a community which refuses to consider pretty seriously the constant trips of doctor and undertaker to Flinker's Alley is putting a blind eye to glaring evil. Later Dr. Stopes shows us the organized community at work on Flinkerdom; its attention is limited to a birth-rate commission of highly ecclesiastical membership and lowly intellectual pretensions.

Here the stage becomes pure platform and Dr. Stopes, represented by an eloquent young woman who gives evidence before the Commission, states her case for the nationalization of contra-ceptive knowledge. It is done with sincerity and dignity; whoso dislikes the whole idea and believes that the case can be answered must first hear that case, for which purpose a visit to the Court Theatre is equivalent to a visit to Dr. Stopes's publisher. The play-goer will further receive what the readers of 'Married Love' will miss, the devastating realism of Miss Minnie Rayner's acting as Mrs. Flinker and the first-rate persuasive powers of Miss Dorothy Holmes-Gore as the spokeswoman for Stopesian doctrine. Considered as a play 'Our Ostriches' does no more than reveal the fact that Dr. Stopes has a good platform manner; on the value of its social instruction it is not for a dramatic critic to pronounce.

THE ALPINE SYMPHONY

By DYNELEY HUSSEY

A Mountain being got with Child by Strauss
Ridiculously brought to birth a Mouse.

NEVER can a new work by a renowned composer have aroused so little expectation of worth as the Alpine Symphony. The audience gathered out of curiosity to see a monster, as humbler folk throng the booth of the giant at a fair. The critics, for the most part taking condemnation for granted, have praised faintly and contented themselves with calling attention to this or that good point in the music. The reception of Mr. Aylmer Buesst's performance last week was unenthusiastic, a tribute to the conductor's courage in scaling heights so ambitious for a novice, rather than to the work itself. Had the Symphony been even superficially attractive, there is little doubt that it would have moved an audience in that frame of mind to an extreme revulsion of feeling. Like the crowd in the play, they would have changed their cry from "This Cæsar was a tyrant" to "O noble Cæsar!"

But the Symphony cannot be dismissed in off-hand fashion. In spirit it is the most pleasing work Strauss has given us. For once he does not grin at us through a horse-collar; it is quite free of his usual naughtiness and almost devoid of unnecessary dissonance. As a piece of symphonic architecture, apart from its programme, it is built up with all his old mastery. Had he written it in this mood twenty-five years ago, it would have been his finest work. It fails because it is the product of a tired brain. There is the usual big theme, associated with the climber, which strides over the stave like a giant. It is the true descendant of the theme for horns in 'Don Juan' and of the Hero-motif in 'Ein Heldenleben.' But the vigour is gone out of it and the notes do not leap in proud triumph up the rocks. The giant is weary and, his vitality being lowered, there is left nothing but a commonplace.

Thorough bush, thorough brier, we are dragged up that weary ascent, past a waterfall, over a glacier, along a giddy precipice to the summit. This I take to be the climax of the work, not the dynamic climax, but the emotional climax. At this moment, above all others, the composer should have had something significant to say. But he can do nothing but squeak out tamely on the oboe a phrase, which reminded me of the flapper in poor *démodé* Rupert Brooke's poem, whose flat clear voice beside him mouthing clear flat platitudes quacks

out, "The view from here is good." Never was so puny a child born of such mountainous labours. And then we are fobbed off with an ugly, though ingenious, web of fugal writing.

Am I, perhaps, mistaken in saying that Strauss has given up his naughtiness? Is he at this moment playing his old horse-collar trick or pulling our legs? Views from the tops of mountains do fill most mouths with commonplaces. But it is not worth setting an orchestra of a hundred and twenty odd such a task. The great artist would rise to the occasion and present to us the beauty of the scene; Strauss has egregiously failed, whether from wilfulness or, as I prefer to think, from lack of imagination.

Indeed, our musical *cicerone* never once, in all those scenes he points out to us as we climb, reveals their beauty with an original word, a surprising turn of phrase. The much-vaunted apparition in the waterfall recalled to my mind those portraits of Liszt or Wagner which, when examined closely, are seen to be composed entirely of nude female forms. It is skilfully done, even as those drawings are. But, again, is it worth the doing? Wagner has painted, in the very manner Strauss uses, better sunrises, grander forest scenery and more lovely meadowlands. Just as one may recognize in the descendants of a great man his noble features weakened to feebleness and pusillanimity, so in this music of Strauss we can trace the debased likeness of Wagner and of Liszt.

After the summit is reached, the composer abandons the Baedeker method and concerns himself more with the emotions of the climbing party than with landscape-painting for its own sake. The calm before the storm was the only section which gave me a genuine thrill. Here the idea is quite perfectly realized. The high *staccato* note repeated again and again by the oboe against the hushed, ominous whispering of the orchestra, produces exactly the sense of impending disaster, the caught breath, the anxious expectation. And when the storm burst, I confess that involuntarily my hand almost sought under the seat for my umbrella. Never was there so violent a downpour in a concert-hall, nor such thunder and lightning. You could feel the rain lashed to fury by the wind stinging your cheek. And how the party slid and slithered down the rocks!

If one were to consider the Symphony without regard for the programme indicated by the composer, it would appear quite as uninspired. Even granting that it is a fine piece of formal music, the themes are not strengthened because we take them as absolute rather than representational. The oboe melody still comes at the central point of the work and is not less feeble, nor the fugal climax that follows, less dull. This is not the occasion to discuss the aesthetics of programme music. But, where there is a definite attempt to convey certain concrete pictures, it seems unreasonable to ignore that intention; and only by taking it into account can many things in Strauss's music, here and elsewhere, be understood at all.

Owing to the unfortunate illness of Sir Thomas Beecham we have been thwarted of hearing the work twice within a week. But the music as presented by Mr. Buesst was perfectly lucid, especially as he adopted the excellent plan of numbering the sections in the programme—a word of gratitude is due to Mr. Edwin Evans for his concise exposition of the work—and displaying corresponding numbers at the back of the orchestra, so that there was no possibility of losing one's way in the tanglewood. In other things Mr. Buesst seemed too anxious to make points; his distortion of the King David March in the 'Meistersinger' overture, for instance, was quite unpardonable. The coarse playing in some of the other pieces may well have been due to the necessary concentration at rehearsals upon the big work of the evening. There was another work new to London in the programme, Mr. Herbert Bedford's 'Hamadryad,' in which the nymph appeared to be spending an afternoon without her faun.

SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE FOXHOUND

By DOUGLAS GORDON

WHEN cubbing upon Dartmoor early last season I had the good fortune to see some remarkably pretty hunting. The scene was the rocky gorge through which the Teign—not the least beautiful of the forest streams—runs its turbulent course, in as difficult and dangerous a bit of country as even Dartmoor can produce. The actual sport was purely spectacular, horses being worse than useless in such a place, but, as an exhibition of peerless hound-work, given amidst charming scenery under pre-eminently delightful conditions, nothing could have been more enjoyable. Several foxes were afoot, making endless work among the great fern-brakes and outcrops of tumbled rock, so that hounds were in almost continuous cry, and in certain places where high precipitous banks formed natural aisles for the conveyance of sound, the crash produced by twenty couple of tuneful tongues, together with the roar of the wild river, positively baffles description.

People who have never hunted upon high altitudes can have little idea of the sound effects in a mountainous glen when every hound throws its tongue, and echo answers a thousandfold. On this occasion

every region near
Seemed all one mutual cry. I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

So conflicting, indeed, were the echoes that unless one happened to occupy some observation point of peculiar advantage whence the pack could be seen clearly, it was literally impossible to locate the cry. Curiously enough, when really nearest it sounded farthest away, and once when the unmistakable chorus of marking hounds, proceeding, as we thought, from the farther side of the stream, induced some of us to attempt a crossing, we were considerably astonished to find them baying their fox under some low crags within a hundred yards of the place where we had been standing.

Not the least striking figure was that of the veteran huntsman who, making no attempt to follow upon horseback, ran or climbed from point to point, cheering his darlings with voice and horn, though as often as not separated from them by the entire width of the ravine. As each clear note was flung back from the opposing ridges with deceptive and almost uncanny effect it occurred to me and to others to wonder that the startling echo, so confusing to human ears, never appeared to puzzle the hounds. When required to come to holloa or to horn they responded at once, in every instance taking a direct and unhesitating line, and whether near or far they never evinced the slightest doubt about the direction whence the call proceeded. And from this circumstance an interesting point arises. Is an animal's sense of hearing more discriminating than that of a human being? This may well be the case, though being largely a question of intelligence one is naturally disposed to think otherwise. Take just one notable example from natural history. The man-eating tiger is said to bewilder its intended victim with a sort of humming purr which sounds from every quarter of the compass, but, according to old *shikaris*, the big cat utilizes this faculty when stalking its natural game, being aware of its inability to deceive any jungle animal by such means. That, however, opens a subject for wider discussion.

The foxhound, in any case, must possess a wonderfully fine ear. Almost every real hound-lover who regularly follows the same pack learns to distinguish the voice of some especial favourite, but comparatively few hunting men are aware that a seasoned hound invariably knows a good note from a bad one. For example—given, of course, a representative pack—when a "babbler" speaks, his fellows, or, at any rate, those who are grey in the craft, scarcely lift their heads, no matter how much the unreliable one may

have to say. On the other hand, the faintest whimper from a voice they have learned to respect has an electrifying effect upon them. A thousand times I have witnessed this in the course of my own experience.

Old hounds get wonderfully knowing—too knowing, sometimes, from the huntsman's point of view, for it is frequently the most intelligent that develop serious faults. "He knows too much" is a sadly common complaint against an erstwhile useful "partner of the chase" who has turned a skirter or worse. When hunting one catchy-scenting day with a famous Gloucestershire pack, more than once I was surprised to notice a single hound running fast and mute away from the others at check, thereby doing much harm and no good. Wondering that the Master—a keen judge of hound work—should keep so doubtful a performer, I mentioned the circumstance to him. The hound was not really a mute-runner, he told me, and often did invaluable service, being quite the keenest line-hunter he possessed. When within sight of the rest she would give tongue freely enough, but she had one grave fault. She was fiercely jealous of first place in the burst, and to secure this would slip away alone on every possible occasion.

Having spoken of the clever way in which foxhounds recognize a reliable note when engaged in field work, I should like to conclude with a somewhat pathetic anecdote, very old and, I believe, quite true, though I cannot positively vouch for its accuracy, merely repeating it as it was originally told to me.

An old hound, belonging to a certain pack, had done such splendid service that when the time came—which comes, alas! to the best—when age must give place to youth and efficiency, instead of going the usual way of his kind he was pensioned off to end his days at the kennels. For a year or two he lived on, and his activities in the field were nearly forgotten until one quiet evening his former huntsman was startled to hear a deep, long-drawn note, singularly like the voice of the old favourite. Before he had time to think about it, however, the pack, which had been unusually quiet all day, with one accord broke into wild clamour, and for several minutes bayed as he had never heard hounds bay before. Wondering what had occurred, he hurried in, to find the gallant old fellow stretched lifeless outside the kennel door. That strange, tense note had been his death cry, and within the palings his comrades, all-comprehending, were sounding his last post.

Verse

SICILY AND OXFORD

ANEMONES
The shades do please,
But now they court the sun.
He at the sight
With lips of light
Kisses them—all but one.

And she this last
More coy, more chaste
Than all her flowery peers
— The willows there
Bent down towards her
At Ifley by the weirs.

I quenched my drouth
In the most red mouth
That noon-parched lad might see.
O among these
Anemones
None is so fair as she.

LOUIS GOLDING

Letters to the Editor

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In the letter which appeared in your issue of November 11, I had regard to the seriousness of the issue with which this correspondence deals and purposely denied myself an easy triumph over your correspondent, Capt. Murphy. As a result, Capt. Murphy claims that I am confuted. This I cannot allow.

In my second letter I contended that from the time of Francis I, France has almost invariably been responsible for the wars in which she has been engaged. With a view to confutation, Capt. Murphy cited the Seven Years War and the Hundred Years War. Unless my memory fails me, the first, so far as England was concerned, was due to the Ruhr-ish behaviour of the French in America, and Prussia was added to the foes of France solely because the foreign policy of France was, at the time, directed by a harlot who desired to avenge a well-deserved snub administered by Frederick the Great. And if Capt. Murphy had referred to his history-book he would have found that the Hundred Years War came to an end more than fifty years before Francis I ascended the throne. Is this confutation? Confutation should be made of sterner stuff.

In his latest letter your correspondent, with striking originality, talks of "fraudulent deflation." How far this familiar charge can be supported even future historians will hesitate to say; but I would suggest that the receiver who, in the interests of the creditors, endeavours to rebuild a business, is unlikely to succeed if his credit is deliberately undermined by the threats and actions of the principal debenture-holder. "Futile passive resistance" is also included, by your correspondent, among the crimes of the German people; but that the inhabitants of the Ruhr should take exception to being shot, imprisoned or evicted does not seem to me to be evidence of inherent vice, and I should hesitate to suggest that in similar circumstances Capt. Murphy would be the first to welcome the invader and do his bidding.

Capt. Murphy would be much interested to know what were my feelings during the war. I may say at once that they were those of the Conservative Party who loyally supported Mr. Lloyd George, and that they took the form of a reflection that though adversity brings us strange bedfellows, we are under no obligation indefinitely to entrust them with our fortunes. My gallant critic quotes Mr. Bonar Law as saying that if Germany were swallowed up by an earthquake, England would gain and not lose. I quite agree. When I was a boy my father (whom Capt. Murphy does not seem to like) used to say the same thing about France—only he put it more forcibly. Similarly, I am assured by my medical adviser that if my appendix were to be removed I should gain and not lose. But while I retain my appendix and Europe (as she must) retains Germany, I should prefer that both shall be healthy.

With reference to unemployment I must, since space is limited, be content to call your correspondent's attention to the difference between the number of unemployed as disclosed by the registers and the total number of individuals who find themselves out of employment. I would also invite him to note that at the time of writing the latest unemployment return shows an increase of 11,000 in one week.

With that old-world courtesy which is the proverbial

attribute of Irishmen, Capt. Murphy charges me with deliberate falsehood. Fortunately, for refutation of the charge I need look no further than the leading article which appeared in the *SATURDAY REVIEW* on the same day as my letter. He also expresses his contempt for those who "bark at the heels of M. Poincaré," he himself considering, apparently, that it is more dignified to keep his nose to those heels in obedience to M. Poincaré's call. So be it. After all, Sir, if every man had the same tastes the fancy-waistcoat industry would be ruined.

I am, etc.,
NELSON NORTH

P.S.—Mr. Bodington's letter deserves more serious treatment and, if I am permitted again to encroach upon your valuable space, I shall reply to it next week.

To the Editor of the *SATURDAY REVIEW*

SIR,—Like your correspondent, Mr. Nelson North, I am anti-French, but unlike him, I was not always so. I knew not only of the French Revolution which Mr. Murphy regards as a blot on European history, but of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, of the atrocities committed by the French in Spain, of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, of the shooting of the Turkish prisoners at Jaffa, and of the suffocation of the Kabyles in the caves of Isly; I knew that the nation of my ancestors held, in short, the record for ferocity among the European peoples; but I liked to believe that its temper had changed. Can anyone believe that now? The German peace delegation upon its arrival at Versailles was received with blows and insults by the populace, even women clerks being attacked; from that moment onwards France has shown herself incapable of generosity or moderation and cynically proclaims her intention of trampling the life out of her prostrate foe. Not so long ago, magnanimity was perhaps of all the virtues the one most extolled by the English governing classes—it is a mystery to me how they can look to-day without disgust on the excesses of our late allies.

As an appeal to history has been made by more than one of your correspondents, I invite them to compare the treatment of Germany by France to-day and in 1806 with the terms dictated to France by Germany in 1871. The captive Napoleon was accorded all the honours due to his imperial rank and entertained sumptuously at Wilhelmshöhe. By the Treaty of Frankfurt, defeated France was left free to choose her own form of government; no limitation was placed on her army or navy; she was not obliged to surrender her mercantile marine or any portion of her colonies. When the Hanoverians were forced to surrender after defeating the Prussians at Langensalza in 1866, by express order of King William of Prussia they were accorded all the honours of war.

A last word. Britain's real motive in the last war and in the diplomacy which preceded it was to maintain the balance of power. But we did not dethrone Germany in order to make France king. At least, I and the millions of others who fought in the war did not. The man must be singularly blind who does not see that a too-powerful France may be as dangerous to England as a too-powerful Germany—nay, more dangerous because nearer.

I am, etc.,
EDMUND B. D'AUVERGNE

West Kensington

To the Editor of the *SATURDAY REVIEW*

SIR,—There will undoubtedly be another war sooner or later if many people like your correspondent, Mr. Nelson North, go on industriously "putting acid in the milk," and filling the minds of the unemployed, who have little knowledge and less critical faculty, with the plausible fallacy that all our industrial troubles are due to France.

It is interesting to know that Mr. North possesses

such strong hereditary prejudice; but it has no bearing on the case. Most of the Victorians were pro-German; but we, their descendants, are not on that account lovers of the exponents of *kultur*, nor in the least anxious to wage a war in order that Germans may escape paying what Mr. North calls a "fine." To avoid the risk of being "routed" by the "raillery" of Mr. North, I leave aside all question of sentiment, which, with most of us, is so deep as hardly to allow anti-French witticisms. But I would suggest to Mr. North that the answer to the question, "What is worse than War?" is not "the Workhouse," but lying propaganda.

It would of course be easy to end unemployment by going to war with France, the strongest military and air Power in the world. Few would be left alive even to occupy the workhouse. The joy in German hearts would satisfy our most ardent pro-Germans. If the "terrible phrase" "Never again, unless it's against France," was ever uttered by an Englishman—which I beg leave to doubt—the phrase was coined in Germany. The old lie about France having made us pay for the privilege of defending her is about worn out; anyhow, it has been exposed in the House of Commons in answers to questions by our prominent anti-French, who, contrary to Mr. North's assertion, are, I maintain, in a constant and unalterable minority.

I am, etc.,
A. G. BAIRD SMITH,
Lieut.-Colonel (retired)

21 Hartfield Square, Eastbourne

THE CAUSES OF UNEMPLOYMENT

To the Editor of the *SATURDAY REVIEW*

SIR,—It is interesting to note that among many causes, inflation and deflation are alternately blamed for unemployment and bad trade. What is inflation but the issue of currency notes without backing—in other words, the substitution of unsecured credit for a gold currency? Deflation is the reverse operation. Since nations, like individuals, cannot obtain credit without security except at ever-increasing cost, inflation should only be used as a last resource in emergency. Once inflation has been used, deflation by *definite steps at definite intervals* should follow at the earliest possible moment. Spasmodic inflation or deflation is as harmful to trade as inflation in any form is to credit.

For the root cause of unemployment we must look elsewhere. Prior to 1914 Great Britain exported more than she imported, the balance in our favour being used to develop the Dominions and open up new industries in other countries. Since 1918 the cost of production has been too great in comparison with that in other countries; as a result imports exceed exports, and that part of the population which prior to 1914 produced for export is now unemployed.

There are very definite causes, both social and material, for this increased cost of production which cannot be discussed in a short letter. It would probably be an act of public service on the part of the *SATURDAY REVIEW* if it would permit the discussion of this problem in its columns.

I am, etc.,
H. S. RYLAND

London, S.E.12

IS SWITZERLAND CIVILIZED?

To the Editor of the *SATURDAY REVIEW*

SIR,—It is probably owing to the state of the political atmosphere at home that the daily papers have allowed to pass without comment the extraordinary incident reported from Switzerland. The murderer Conradi has been acquitted, and the verdict was received with tempestuous approval both within and without the court!

The crime was premeditated and cold-blooded, yet Switzerland, which claims to be an enlightened country, has *endorsed the right to assassinate*. Will anyone



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, No. 74

THE TRICK SISTERS

By 'QUIZ'

suggest that if even a Bolshevik had been shot down in England his murderer would have escaped the consequences? The verdict displays so complete an ignorance of the principles of justice that one is forced to ask: "Is Switzerland civilized?"

I am, etc.,

C. L. FREERTON

SCORING IN LAWN TENNIS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In recent years you have at different times published reflections of mine on the game of lawn tennis, so may I be allowed to draw attention to an anomaly that frequently occurs owing to the present method—a method which has always obtained hitherto—of deciding the winners of lawn tennis matches. The anomaly consists in the fact that in a three or five set match the winner of the larger number of sets is declared the winner of the match, even though the total number of games credited to the winner may be less than those won by his opponent.

This occurred in the famous Davis Cup contest between Australasia and America (U.S.A.), played at Melbourne in November, 1908—one of the most tremendous contests ever recorded in the whole history of the cup. In the singles Mr. Norman Brookes lost to Mr. Beals Wright (U.S.A.) as follows: 6-0, 6-3, 5-7, 2-6, 10-12. Mr. Wright was the winner because he won three sets out of five; nevertheless it will be observed that Mr. Brookes, the official loser, won 29 games to the 28 of Mr. Beals Wright. The same anomaly occurred in this year's Davis Cup contest—one of the ties in which Spain was concerned.

My point can be further illustrated by the recent match in the London Covered Courts Championship at Queen's Club, between Mr. D. M. Greig and Mr. F. Gordon Lowe. Owing to the retirement of Mr. Lowe, as a result of a strained tendon in the first match of the fifth set, Mr. Greig was declared the winner, or as officially recorded Mr. Greig beat Mr. Lowe 6-3, 2-6, 1-6, 6-3, retired. It will be observed, however, that the loser actually scored 18 games to 15.

Surely this is an anomaly that should be abolished. One way out is to adopt the method of scoring used in the game of bridge: the winner of the "rubber" to decide the length of the match, but the match itself to go to the individual (or "doubles" pair) that scores the greatest number of games. The scoring by the actual number of "aces" won would be too involved. I offer the suggestion to the L.T.A.

I am, etc.,

"TOURNEBROCHE"

'PEACE IN OUR TIME'

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In thanking Mr. Gerald Gould for the many kind things he has said about my book, 'Peace in Our Time,' I should nevertheless like to draw attention to one word that has crept in, either by inadvertence on Mr. Gould's part or some lack of skill on my own. The word is the word "typical" in the sentence "Mr. Onions thinks that the typical ex-officer is a slack and irresponsible person." I hardly see how, in the complexity of the case, there can be such a thing as a "typical" ex-officer, but even if this were so it would make little difference. I wished to emphasize the conflict between the man and the machine—and by "man" I mean the man in control no less than the man who too often is the victim. They have their troubles alike, and I have tried sympathetically to understand both, neither making the one invariably too wise nor the other too infallibly deserving. If anything goes wrong it is not a "type" that suffers, but a human being, whether slack and irresponsible or the reverse; and it is with these that we have to deal. And as Mr. Gould says, these make a modernity within a modernity to-day as surely they never did before.

I am, etc.,

Henley-on-Thames

OLIVER ONIONS

Reviews

THE BATTLE THAT WAS NOT FOUGHT

Official History of the Great War. Naval Operations. Vol. III. By Sir Julian S. Corbett. Longmans. Text, 21s.; Maps, 21s.

Jutland: A Plea for a Naval General Staff. By Major A. C. B. Alexander. Hugh Rees.

THE third volume of the official history of the war at sea covers the period from May, 1915, to the close of the battle of Jutland. Owing to the lamented death of the author, Sir Julian Corbett, immediately after the last chapter had been completed, dealing with the closing phase of the battle, there is no criticism of the strategy and tactics employed and no discussion of the numerous technical questions involved. Major Alexander's slim pamphlet, which is severely critical and written from the staff point of view, to some extent supplements this very serious omission, and at least indicates the issues which require examination, though the author does not appear to be quite at home in naval matters or to have the latest information at his disposal.

On the eve of Jutland Lord Jellicoe was working out a plan for entrapping the German fleet. British light cruisers were to push down the Kattegat to the Great Belt and Sound, with a battle squadron supporting them. A British minefield was to be laid south of Horn Reef (off the Jutland coast) and just clear of this minefield the rest of the British battle fleet and the battle cruisers were to be ready. The scheme was never put to the test, because it so happened that Scheer, the German Admiral, was working on a very similar plan, which, owing to unsatisfactory weather, he had to discard at the last moment. He decided, however, to send his whole cruiser force out to the Norwegian coast, and to follow himself quietly with the battle fleet.

At noon of May 30, 1916, the British Admiralty began to send out warning messages. What information it had at its disposal is nowhere clearly stated, nor is that information printed in the 'Official Despatches,' issued by the Admiralty Staff in 1920. Sir Julian Corbett says:

At mid-day of the 30th it was decided to warn Admiral Jellicoe that the German fleet might go to sea early next morning, and that there were as many as 16 submarines out, most of which were believed to be in the North Sea. No definite orders were given. Beyond further indications that a large operation was at hand all was still obscure. . . . Shortly after 5 p.m., however, it became known that all sections of the High Sea Fleet had received a seemingly important operation signal. This could not be deciphered, but there was no time to lose, and at 5.40 a telegram was sent to the Commander-in-Chief and Admiral Beatty, conveying to them the latest information, and ordering them to concentrate as usual eastward of the "Long Forties."

Once more there is no light on what this "latest information" was, and the "Official Despatches" reveal nothing of it. Major Alexander comments on the "extreme looseness" of the Admiralty instruction, and on the fact that no action of any kind was taken to prepare the Grand Fleet for going out until 5.40 p.m. He condemns emphatically the Admiralty decision to hold back Tyrwhitt's powerful force of destroyers and light cruisers at Harwich, though of this Sir Julian seems to approve. He expresses surprise, which will be shared by most careful students of the operations, that with the prospect of a large-scale German movement, the third battle cruiser squadron, consisting of the *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, and *Indomitable*, then at Scapa, was not sent forward to make its junction with Beatty. Thus on the eve of the battle there was a failure at two points to concentrate all possible force ready for action. There was a failure on the Admiralty part, through fear of an invasion or raid on the Channel, to push forward Tyrwhitt's flotillas. There was a failure on Jellicoe's

part to give Beatty all the battle cruisers that were available, though with Beatty were the four powerful battleships of the *Queen Elisabeth* type. But these from their lower speed were not able to manoeuvre altogether satisfactorily with the battle cruisers.

What, in the light of the latest evidence, were the causes why the battle of Jutland ended without the battle fleet (or the twenty-four battleships with Lord Jellicoe) seriously engaging? One of the chief causes was evidently the failure to concentrate the whole British fleet at 2 p.m. on May 31, off the Danish coast. Lord Beatty was instructed to be at a point sixty-nine miles away from Lord Jellicoe's rendezvous. Sir Julian Corbett regards this interval as undoubtedly "too great for a true advanced squadron," if a pitched battle was imminent, but defends it on the grounds that Jellicoe had to cover our blockading squadron in the north of the North Sea, and that there was no very obvious prospect of a great battle. He brings out a new fact which, very strangely, is not disclosed in the "Official Despatches":

Our directional wireless [intercepting and placing the position of the German wireless signals] up till noon [of May 31, the day of battle] could only indicate that the [German] battle fleet was still in the Jade.

Scheer had transferred the call sign of his flagship to the naval headquarters at Wilhelmshaven, which, it appears, was his regular practice when he went to sea. We did not know this, and thus for once the wireless intercepts proved misleading. But we certainly did know that the Germans were out with a large force, and it was in the highest degree important, in view of the fiasco in the battle of the Dogger Bank and the recent raid on Lowestoft, that they should be caught and destroyed. To that aim all secondary considerations should have been sacrificed.

Thus, when Beatty came into contact with the German battle cruisers, he had no reason to expect an encounter with the German battle fleet, and our own main battle fleet was far away and outside supporting distance. In the artillery encounter with the Germans it must regretfully be said that the British battle cruisers had the worst of matters. Two of our battle cruisers went up in the first forty minutes through defects which had been noted by Beatty at the Dogger Bank, but which had not been remedied by the Admiralty, though after Jutland they were corrected without any special difficulty in the surviving ships. The light was most unfavourable for our gunners, but bad mistakes are revealed by Sir Julian—war is a record of mistakes, and the valuable history is that which points them out so that they may be avoided in the future. Two of Beatty's battle cruisers failed to take up their proper target in Hipper's squadron of battle cruisers. When the fifth battle squadron brought a crushing fire to bear on the enemy and hit again and again, the Germans report that they were saved from disaster by "the poor quality of the British bursting charges"; "our armour-piercing shells," says Sir Julian, "broke up on oblique impact without penetrating the armour." Our torpedoes appear to have been of the same ineffective character, thus depriving of its fruit the magnificent heroism of our destroyers' officers and crews, whose bravery won enthusiastic tributes even from the Germans. The *Lützow* was hit and continued in line. The *Seydlitz* was hit by the destroyer *Petard* under the armour belt, amidships, but she, too, continued in battle. The *Wiesbaden* was torpedoed under her conning tower, but did not sink, and was afterwards able to torpedo the *Marlborough*. "Dud" ammunition and "dud" torpedoes had no small part in enabling the Germans to escape.

When at last Jellicoe with his twenty-four battleships arrived, owing to mistakes as to the exact position of Beatty's force and the enemy, which were inevitable with the clumsy system of signalling positions in use in 1916, and with the conditions of battle, where visual touch had not been throughout maintained between the two sections of the fleet, he found that his formation was unsuitable, and that he was "too near" the enemy to

deploy towards the enemy. At that supreme moment, on which everything depended, the day was already far advanced and quick action was of overwhelming importance. The British ships already in battle with the Germans obviously expected a deployment towards the enemy and took up stations accordingly. The Germans, as we know from their own disclosures, were completely surprised; they had never expected the terrible presence of these twenty-four battleships, which seemed to them to spell immediate doom. The strange fact is that, notwithstanding the late hour of the day and the immense urgency of a decisive stroke, Jellicoe decided against the deployment which would have brought his overwhelming force swiftly into battle at close range. There were risks, of course, in such a deployment, but then there were grave risks when Nelson steered in to the night attack at the Nile, or when after the fullest calculation he led his column down upon the enemy at Trafalgar. "Nothing great can be achieved without risk"—how his words ring in our ears to-day, when we realize the consequences of trying to avoid all risk. Surprising as it seems, the elaborate British preparations for battle had failed to provide for the situation which confronted the British Commander-in-Chief on May 31, 1916:

To continue the course south-east (says Sir Julian Corbett) would have led nearer to the enemy, but for this there was no clear signal. Equal speed deployment could be signalled with a numeral flag, indicating the number of points away from the course the fleet was on, but the signal had never been made with a zero flag.

Divested of technicalities and put into plain English, the meaning of all this is that the approach to the enemy was made in a formation which was not sufficiently flexible, and the opportunity was lost to deal a crushing blow. Yet Sir Julian expatiates on the "harvest of the long years of preparation reaped in that fateful hour." The "harvest" was the escape of a German fleet from a British force with a 50 per cent. superiority of armoured tonnage and a 170 per cent. superiority in weight of broadside, after inflicting on the British double its own loss in men and tonnage.

Little fresh light is shed upon the incidents of the battle after the battle fleet had begun its deployment. The fact is not clearly brought out that these twenty-four battleships discharged only a comparatively trifling number of rounds from their heavy guns, and that the Germans manoeuvred with such success, under a severe fire and when placed in an almost hopeless situation, as to get away with relatively slight loss. To their second escape during the night the British Admiralty contributed by its plan of sending to the Commander-in-Chief not the actual wireless intercepts, or the most important of them, but its interpretation of those intercepts. A message of Scheer had definitely indicated Horn Reef as his line of retreat; this vital fact was not disclosed to Jellicoe. Throughout the battle and the so-called pursuit the British tactics (apart from Beatty's resolute attacks) were dominated by defensive considerations and the avoidance of torpedoes and submarines. Scheer was quite ready to run big risks, and Jellicoe was anxious above everything to keep his force intact for future use. It is strange, but true, that "the cardinal fault of 'ulterior objects,'" which Mahan had pointed out as the real explanation of French failure in the eighteenth century wars, was committed in the handling of the Grand Fleet at Jutland.

The strangest fact in connexion with the 'Official History' is the notice prefixed to it, in which the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty decline to accept responsibility for its accuracy, and state that

Some of the principles advocated in the book, especially the tendency to minimize the importance of seeking battle and of forcing it to a conclusion, are directly in conflict with their views.

It would have been better in the circumstances if the official *imprimatur* had been withheld altogether, as the tendency throughout is to maintain that a defensive attitude is right in modern naval war—a principle that can lead only to disaster.

THE TREFOIL

The Trefoil. By A. C. Benson. Murray. 12s. net.

A TITLE which needs explanation may easily mislead a book-seeker, but beyond a photograph of the then Master of Wellington on the wrapper, there is no external hint that this book is not of the same type as 'The House of Quiet,' by the same author, whose vogue on both sides of the Atlantic and a strong personality have enabled him to supply a new thyroid gland to a starveling Cambridge College. 'The Trefoil,' that leaf being the principal charge on the Benson arms, takes us through the three Pre-Lambeth stages of his father's career which were crowded out in the 1,500 pp. of the author's 'Life.' "Romantic, arresting, and vivid" were those first three stages. The future Archbishop, left penniless early in his Cambridge days, was Sizar and Fellow of Trinity, and a master at Rugby, where he lived with his Sidgwick cousins and carried off the only daughter, then 17, to Wellington, for which post he had been named to the Prince Consort by Temple. There he made a Public School out of an insufficiently endowed Military Orphanage, and was enabled to build a Master's Lodge and a Gothic Chapel, beautiful, but far too small.

The Governors added one aisle; my father went to see it and was furious over the disfigurement . . . and there could not have been a more curious irony than the other aisle, destined to restore the balance and erected as a memorial to him . . . when he would have sickened at the sight of it.

The headship of Rugby and the Bishopric of Calcutta he refused, but just when Wellington was beginning to be a competence to a man with six children, he accepted from Bishop Christopher Wordsworth a Lincoln Canonry of far less value. There he started a Theological College, refused a Cambridge Professorship, and after four short years was sent by Beaconsfield to create the see of Truro, and build our first post-reformation Cathedral. Five years later his Christmas post brought letters from Gladstone and Queen Victoria, pressing him to go to Canterbury, and that over the head of his former Rugby chief, then Bishop of Exeter. Every position to which he was called he filled with peculiar dignity. He was survived by five brilliant children, the youngest of whom died a priest of the Roman Church, while the second son had startled society and doubtless his austere father, by 'Dodo,' and later in 'Our Family Affairs' gave his view of the results of the Benson-Sidgwick marriage.

Dr. Benson has not fully used an opportunity of toning down his first portrait of a severe master and father, who wrote to his undergraduate son begging him not to go to a Club supper to meet Henry Irving! "I felt like a little boat which had come within range of an 80-ton gun." Sundays at home were beyond the imagination of the present day, and tobacco spelt taboo. But the early Wellington boys come mostly from the barrack square, or undisciplined homes, the fathers having fallen in the Crimea or the Mutiny. Nor does the son consider his father an educator of the first rank, forgetting that it was not for some years that entrance scholarships were given at Wellington. The first of these fell to Arthur Verrall, who from Cambridge came to stay at Lincoln. The children "enjoyed, even when we did not understand it, his eager talk, the shrill triumphant outcry with which he concluded an argument, and his even shriller burst of laughter." Now this is Verrall to the life, and is but a fair sample of many word portraits in the book—Kingsley, Westcott taking headers at Etretat in a red-striped bathing dress, Wilkinson, second Bishop of Truro, J. A. Reeve, who went on from Truro with the family to Addington and Lambeth, the Wordsworths, Henry and Arthur Sidgwick, Mrs. Benson's brothers, and above all that lady herself, whom Gladstone thought the cleverest woman in Europe. "I never saw," says her son, "a more generous nature; she did not pardon; she forgave and

forgot; she really wished people, including her own children, to develop on their own lines." Equally charming are the word landscapes of the Wellington country, of Lincoln and its cathedral and surroundings, but it is over Cornwall that Dr. Benson revels most. Of the many good stories may be repeated that of an absent-minded Vicar who had a way of slipping out of church prematurely, and with his own consent was chained and padlocked to his stall by his sister. There are several excellent family photographs (some of which have already appeared in the 'Life') and a very complete index.

WANTED—A FOOL-PROOF CONSTITUTION

Second Chambers in Theory and Practice. By H. B. Lees-Smith. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.

THIS book deals with a subject the importance of which it is not easy to exaggerate. For the present the question of the House of Lords, the Second Chamber in our Parliamentary system and also the Second Estate of the Realm, is in the background, but sooner or later it is bound to become acute again. Nowadays few will assert with conviction that the composition of the Upper House is ideal or even fairly satisfactory. Most people are agreed that reform is necessary by the introduction, to a greater or less extent, of the elective principle in partial replacement of the hereditary principle which now mainly governs its membership. And this not with a view to minimizing its powers still farther, but of giving a more popular and stronger basis to its great functions of examining, revising, and, when it deems right, opposing or at any rate postponing Bills sent up to it by the House of Commons. What is wanted is, in fact, such a change in the House of Lords as will go some way—perhaps a long way—to provide the country with the fool-proof Constitution it so plainly needs in these days of excessive and often revolutionary political movements. In our domestic politics there is no more urgent matter. Following on the Report of the Conference on House of Lords Reform which met in 1917 and 1918, and had the late Lord Bryce as chairman, the Coalition Government put forward certain proposals in July, 1922, which were considered by the Upper House, but nothing definite was done, and that is how the question stands to-day.

In this book, which is vigorously rather than well written, Mr. Lees-Smith presents a tolerably full account of the chief Second Chambers of the world, including those of the United States, France, and Norway; a large part of the volume is concerned with the Senates of the Dominions and the differences that exist among them, not only in details, but in their general structure. The book is sufficiently up to date to cover the Senates of the Free State and of Northern Ireland. Undoubtedly the work is of value in so far as it gives a good deal of information on the subject all brought together in a convenient fashion—some of the information, as in the case of the Second Chamber of Norway, is quite fresh. We have little to say of the manner in which Mr. Lees-Smith states what may be called the admitted facts of the case, though there are ways of putting even admitted facts so as to convey a wrong impression. It is when he comments on the facts, and applies these comments especially to the question of the House of Lords, that we join issue with him.

To start with, Mr. Lees-Smith entirely overlooks the fact which differentiates the House of Lords from every Senate or Second Chamber in existence—the fact that it has embodied and still embodies in many respects the great traditions of England, the continuity of her splendid history, and the abiding force and solidity of the instincts, emotions, and convictions that form and inform her general character. No other Second Chamber

holds anything like the same place in the story of its people. The American Senate has far more power than the House of Lords, but who would ever dream of identifying the Senate with the history of the United States in the same way as the House of Lords is part and parcel of that of England? Facts such as these make no appeal to Mr. Lees-Smith, yet they are fundamental in any adequate consideration of our Upper Chamber. Indeed, we should scarcely expect from him, as he is now a shining light of the Socialist Party, anything really helpfully constructive with respect to the House of Lords. After all, the Government of July, 1922, did try to preserve in a considerable measure its essential character. Mr. Lees-Smith would have it a very strictly limited affair—to make suggestions for amendments, and to confine its power to securing sufficient delay for "proper" debate on these amendments by the other House, sufficient time being allowed for the expression of public opinion on them. "A delay of one session could secure this result," he says. But would it? And what if public opinion gave forth an uncertain sound, or, what would be infinitely worse, what if public opinion was stampeded or overborne by the sound and fury of extremists? That is the danger, and it is a real danger. It is not by Mr. Lees-Smith's Second Chamber that we shall come anywhere near a fool-proof Constitution. That is still to seek.

ARAB CHARACTER

A Fool's Hell. By Rosita Forbes. Butterworth. 7s. 6d. net.

THIS tale of a woman torn between her love for her husband and her affectionate pity for her ill-fated sister. No strong emotion is aroused by the joys and sorrows of the protagonists, who are of the stock company of actors in this sort of drama. Moreover, the mechanism of the book is rather elaborate than ingenious, the reader having to make allowances for a fairly high degree of futility and credulity in the several plotters and counterplotters before he himself can believe the record of their doings. But the author evidently set out to tell a story of brisk and exciting adventure, and in this object she has succeeded well. There is plenty of invention and movement, some stirring scenes, and one pleasant and skilfully disguised surprise towards the end. Scenery and local details are, as might be expected, treated with picturesqueness, and the background of Egyptian politics and Arab warfare, besides being interesting, is, no doubt, "the real thing." Altogether a lively and readable book, which should make a wide appeal.

GRANDIOSE MUSINGS

Drama and Mankind. A Vindication and a Challenge. By Halcott Glover. Benn. 8s. 6d. net.

ON the subject of the curious jargon used by teetotallers, Mr. Stephen Leacock once observed that when an English workman innocently believes himself to be drinking a glass of beer, there are others who conceive him as "a consumer of alcohol." So when an ordinary person might imagine that he is just looking at a play, Mr. Glover will inform him that what he is undergoing is "a personal application in the mind of the spectator of the truth to essential life which is expressed." As a definition of drama this is no more than pomposity badly phrased; unfortunately it is typical of Mr. Glover's book, which consists of a mass of generalizations, mostly ill-phrased. "Drama" is a word that seems to go dreadfully to people's heads and lead them into all manner of unnecessary eloquence which is but rarely spilled over the other arts. To attain some interest this kind of grandiose

musings over the play-house must have concrete and definite relations: it must bring itself on to the benches and into the lights of the theatre: it must, in short, be actual and realist.

But Mr. Glover prefers the clouds to the earth and wings his way through a pseudo-philosophical empyrean on a course which leads nowhere in particular. In so far as he claims that drama must appeal to and express the dignity and excellence of man and be not superior but worthy of the common worth, he makes an abstract point about the democracy of great art, which is worth discussing in terms of artistic fact and achievement. But he has no taste for such discussion; he darts off again among the generalities without having the guidance of a trained philosophic mind to keep his random thoughts in order. The vindication, we are told by the publisher, is of the public; the challenge is to the superior person. The public, one imagines, will go on visiting such plays as are lively, truthful, romantic, or pictorial, just in so far as they are good of their kind. It needs no vindication and it would probably resent this procession of external vindication for the very reason that it implies just that mental superiority which Mr. Glover intends to challenge.

CONVERSATIONS IN AN INN

Word of the Earth. By Anthony Richardson. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

IN an old inn called the "Lady Gwendoline," discreetly hidden among the Wiltshire Downs, there gathered of an evening a poet, a physicist, a shepherd and an idiot, who drank a fabulous amount of ale and garrulously discussed all manner of things. The poet and the physicist began by disliking each other fiercely, for each encroached reprehensibly on the other's domain. The poet, indeed, as Mr. Richardson explains in his foreword, was more than half the man of science, with his precise cataloguing of nature and the emotions; while the physicist sometimes unwittingly ventured near the springs of poetry. But neither was more than half wise, and in most of the discussions in which these strangely assorted four took part it was the shepherd who came nearest the truth. He had the wisdom which the hills give those who take their living upon them. Except for one gruesome little episode with a spider, the idiot has little to do except supply, as a kind of tail-piece to every chapter, a seemingly imbecile observation which yet succinctly sums up the subject under discussion. He is blind instinct, hitting the truth without aiming at it.

A random selection of chapters will indicate the wide range of conversation in the "Lady Gwendoline": they talk about Grass, about Conservation, about Happiness, Hussies, and Little Fishes; about Themselves, Thrills and the Waste of Days. And of all the subjects of discussion the best is that upon Grass. There are several other chapters that for beauty come near to this, but there is none that surpasses it. Mr. Richardson is a poet, but his greatest asset is his ability to tell a story, which is admirably illustrated in the chapter on 'Thrills.'

A strain of pantheistic mysticism runs throughout the book which sometimes reminds us of Mr. Machen and sometimes of Mr. James Stephens, and there is also more than a touch of Mr. Belloc. But the result of this ghostly collaboration is peculiarly Mr. Richardson's own, and succeeds quite remarkably in capturing the spirit of the downlands which pervades the book. Mr. Richardson reinterprets the Charles Sorley of the 'Un-girt Runners':

The rain is on our lips
We do not run for prize . . .

This is a book full of promise, with some excellent things in it. When the author has submitted himself to a more rigorous discipline of style we feel confident that his work will count for a good deal.

New Fiction

BY GERALD GOULD

The Owls' House. By Crosbie Garstin. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

Fombombo. By T. S. Stribling. Nisbet. 7s. 6d.

A Triangle. By Maurice Baring. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

The Parson's Progress. By Compton Mackenzie. Cassell. 7s. 6d. net.

I DO not like adventure stories. That is to say, I do not like adventure stories unless they are so good as to make me forget that I do not like them. I like 'Fombombo' and 'The Owls' House,' just as I like 'Treasure Island' and 'The Master of Ballantrae.' Not that either of them has the Stevensonian precision and exquisiteness of art; I must not exaggerate; but they are so good that the exaggeration would be forgivable. And indeed they are both comparable to Stevenson in one essential—that, while you are reading them, they blot out the unsatisfactory inconclusive world, and engross you in a thundering and dazzling world of their own. Between 'The Owls' House' and 'The Master of Ballantrae' there is also a slight, but not superficial, resemblance of form. For Scotland read Cornwall, and for North America read North Africa, and the resemblance starts out. It is not superficial, because this deliberate transference of adventure and excitement from home to a foreign setting is part of a definite conception of romance: it broadens, it enriches: it calls into use that deep and most romantic irony whereby the desires and agonies of one man, towering so high and blazing so noticeably to his own apprehension in his customary environment, dwindle and fade before the incomprehension of the innumerable folk who will not try to understand or spare him. Mr. Garstin's story is fairly remote in time as well as in place; he carries us back to highwaymen and violent smugglers; he has the easy and powerful air of taking all that violence, that directness and insecurity, for granted. But when you are hurried away to Moroccan slavery and war, yesterday's insecurity seems calm by comparison, and your smugglers and highwaymen shine white like lambs. Back to Cornwall—only to find it as insecure as ever: Ortho, caught by the press-gang, man-handled, sandbagged, comes to himself to discover that he is bound for the West Indies. "West Indies! He drew a deep breath. Well, at all events that was something new." There can be no doubt that this is the right way to take life.

From whatever point of view you regard Mr. Garstin's work, it is excellent. I can find no flaw. He writes entirely in the spirit of his theme, always well, always freshly, always naturally. And still the wonder grows that one small head can carry all he knows. How can he have discovered the conditions of slavery in eighteenth-century Morocco, with which he appears to be so perfectly acquainted? One of the slaves exposed for auction addresses the buyers thus:

Ahoy there, lords! Behold me! Nine years was I in Algiers at the house of Abd-el-Hamri the lawyer in Sidi Okbar Street. No *Nesrani* dog am I, but a Moslem, a true believer. Moreover, I am skilled in sewing and carpentry and many kindred arts. Question me, lords, that ye may see I speak the truth. Ahoy there, behold me!

His name is Mr. Puddicombe. It is a pleasant touch. But neither the irony nor the excitement is spilt about haphazard: the plot is closely knit, and every incident has its logical necessity in character. I have again to remind myself of the danger of exaggeration, or I should explode into superlatives. I will content myself with saying—Read the book: you will not be disappointed.

'Fombombo' too is delightfully full of thrills and plots, fights, thefts, blood, jokes; but its irony is more obvious. An American commercial traveller, surely the simplest, sweetest kind of human creature, goes to Venezuela to sell small-arms and hardware. He

walks, of course, straight into a revolution. But more than that—by sheer force of obtuseness and ingenuousness, he *makes* a revolution. Every time that he fails to understand an innuendo (and he invariably fails to understand innuendoes), his credit as a schemer of incredible tortuousness spreads. Every time he lands himself in a mess (and he is always landing himself in messes), admiration of his courage and ruthlessness grows. And Venezuela apparently knows something about ruthlessness. In the corner of it which, according to Mr. Stribling, calls itself "the Free and Independent Republic of Rio Negro," dictator succeeds dictator at the cost of unlimited bloodshed; each one, in the name of liberty, puts everybody he can lay hands on into dungeons or slave-gangs, confiscates other people's horses, wives, and property in general; and declares himself the "First Constitutional President" of the Free and Independent Republic. The commercial traveller's code is a little different. He believes in business, based on "business methods and strict business honesty"—and, until he falls in love, in nothing else. His moral and intellectual sustenance has been provided for him by the business talks of his employer, and the business poets who write like this:

It's better to boost than to knock;
It's better to help than to shove,
We're brothers all on the road of life,
And the law of the road is love.

Or, perhaps even nearer perfection:

Did you speak that word of warning?
Did you act the part of friend?
Do your duty resolutely,
It means dollars in the end.

To turn from all this colour and movement to the quiet worlds of Mr. Baring and Mr. Compton Mackenzie is rather a shock. There is no reason in nature why the spiritual adventures with which they deal should not be, in their way, as exciting as all the wounds and deaths of Morocco and Venezuela. Nor is a quiet interest necessarily less absorbing than a swift excitement. And, for that matter, both Mr. Baring and Mr. Mackenzie do introduce, though they do not obtrude, startling incidents. If, on the whole, their excitements fail to excite, and their quiet interests fail to interest, it must be through some defect of treatment. Both of them are very good writers. But both of them seem to be taking their goodness too much for granted. Mr. Baring has discovered, and so to speak patented, a particular way of handling a story. Instead of assuming the conventional omniscience of the novelist, he lets people wonder about one another as they do in real life. It is the method of gossip. Now gossip, in life, is a contemptible vice, almost universally practised by people who are not at all contemptible. It is a weakness of the flesh from which few of the most spiritual seem exempt. Generally, and fortunately, the speculation is its own reward: you wonder about people's motives, or action, and go on wondering, and forget. The weakness of this indeterminateness when transferred to fiction is that it is in the strict sense inartistic: it leaves the material shapeless. And it is too easy. Mr. Baring might retort that all necessary indications of what actually happened are given, in hints if not in statements, by the various notebooks he affects to quote; and that if we cannot fill in the picture, it is our own fault. And to that of course we can only reply that perhaps it is. All the same, I have not felt Mr. Baring's previous essays in this manner to be as sketchy as 'A Triangle.' On the contrary, I have thought them extremely subtle and delicately complete. 'A Triangle' appears somehow to lack a unifying principle, to be slack. But it is very clever.

'The Parson's Progress' is the second volume in the trilogy which began with 'The Altar Steps' and is to be completed with 'The Heavenly Ladder.' It is written with Mr. Mackenzie's customary fluency, but with less than his usual charm. He has chosen a very special sphere, and failed to make its interest general. In a word, he is—a rare fault with him—dull.

Round the Library Table

A MISCELLANY

A NEAT and workmanlike selection from the letters of Petrarch has just been issued under the editorial care of Mr. A. F. Johnson (Milford, 8s. 6d. net). My reading of Petrarch had been confined to his sonnets—317 of them—with the interspersed ballades, sestines, madrigals, and odes. In form they are exquisite, but they left on me the impression, like the Elizabethan poems with which I was comparing them, of being mere poetic exercises, words divorced from real feeling. His Latin letters are quite different. While he is not unconscious of his position as *arbiter literarum*, he writes as simply as it is possible for a Ciceronian to do, and as he deals with the most interesting men of affairs of his day, the matter is full of interest. The last selection in the book is a part of the letter which told the story of Griselda to Boccaccio. Why was this beautiful episode omitted?

* * *

Up to now the only Renaissance letters I had read were those of Politian and his friends in Italy and those of Erasmus and his circle, now being edited by Mr. P. S. Allen, who has just been elected to the British Academy. Politian's letters are full of his quarrels with rival scholars, whose shortcomings in learning, grammar, manners, and family he treats with the bitterness of a German professor. I especially remember one venomous diatribe which concludes with the sudden apostrophe "Nunc meus homo, quid penses de hoc?" I am bound to say that Petrarch is nearer the style of Cicero's Familiar Letters than any of the later Italian scholars. I wonder why schoolboys are not given these letters, which contain Latin as it was really spoken, instead of the Orations, which are in a style no human being could use for communicating with his fellows.

* * *

How great the influence of Petrarch was may be measured by the abridged bibliography supplied by Mr. Johnson, which takes no notice of its permeation of all fifteenth and sixteenth century literature in France and England: another over-praised poet—Goethe—has had far less. Sig. Benedetto Croce has in a recent study of this poet, translated by Miss Anderson (Methuen, 7s. 6d. net), neatly taken to pieces the exaggerated reputation which has been forced on the world by his admirers, examined one by one his works, and in the emulsion of due praise has concealed the most telling criticism of their workmanship, and has, in fact, brought Goethe to the bar of common sense. I have always felt that Goethe's work was chiefly noteworthy as being that of a German—if he had been an English poet he would have ranked with a score of others, and would not have been coddled into believing he was a philosopher. "The Second Part of Faust is best considered not as deep philosophy but as a poetical libretto," says Croce.

* * *

Miss Helen Douglas Adam, whose collected poems up to her present age of twelve have just been published with several portraits of the author—"The Elfin Pedlar and Tales told by Pixy Pool" (Hodder and Stoughton, 7s. 6d. net)—has the charm of childhood, its occasional power of catching the echoes of verbal music, and an imagination which has evidently been encouraged to develop itself on literary lines. In some of the songs written when she was ten, there is a quite extraordinary sense of form, and, generally, though much of the matter of her verse is a repetition of the commonplace, it is plainly seen afresh. "The Elfin Pedlar" was written

for a Christmas play for her class, and though the "insight" and the "art" are obviously derived from her reading, they are at the same time quite exceptional at her age.

* * *

A Welsh nonconformist, even if he were the victim of a judicial murder, is not the sort of person in whose biography I should have said I was likely to be interested, yet Mr. William Pierce's 'John Penry, his Life, Times, and Writings' (Hodder and Stoughton, 16s. net), has turned out quite an interesting book—the parts which are not about Penry perhaps quite as much as the others, such as the account of Elizabethan Wales, and that of University life at the time. John Penry was a student at Peterhouse, who afterwards was mixed up with the Marprelate Press, though not Martin Marprelate himself, and it was probably this connexion that aroused Whitgift's enmity and brought Penry to his death. Mr. Pierce has made a quite striking book, and if we can often see where he has had to restrain his indignation, we can also see that he has done so, and when not "facit indignatio versus."

* * *

Two important historical works written by women have been issued during the last few days. Both of them fill up gaps in our knowledge, and what is still better, both of them are the result of a serious study of original records and other documents—a record is a document which has always been in the proper legal custody, and is accepted as proof in a court of law. Miss C. L. Scofield writes the history of 'The Life and Reign of Edward the Fourth' (Longmans, 52s. 6d. net), a most important period of change and development in our constitutional and legal history, and Miss F. M. Evans (Mrs. Higham) surveys the official place of 'The Principal Secretary of State' from 1558 to 1680 (Longmans, 30s. net). There are several things one would like to impress on writers of history, but none more important than the essential continuity of English institutions. That is why I have never believed that the House of Lords could be reformed into a Senate: the only radical change that could take place must be one sanctioned by tradition.

* * *

Old things die hard in England. Before there was a post, royal proclamations were sent out by Exchequer messengers, who received a fixed sum for their distribution to the Sheriffs. Centuries passed, proclamations were printed and sent off by post, but until a few years ago, and perhaps to-day, a messenger always came round from the Treasury to the Privy Council Office to assist in doing up the parcels for the post—though neither Treasury nor Privy Council Office knows why. Miss Evans discusses the attendance of the Secretary of State in the House of Lords in virtue of a writ of summons. She rather misses the essential difference of his writ from that of a peer—and ought to have consulted the Report on the Dignity of a Peer for it—but that is a small point. The Secretary of State may have ceased to receive a writ as such because he was always a Privy Councillor, but Ministers of State and Privy Councillors received their writs till well on in Queen Victoria's reign, when they were discontinued without any Parliamentary authority—I think by Lord Brougham; it was the sort of utilitarian step he would take.

LIBRARIAN

Acrostics

PUBLISHERS' PRIZES

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set.

RULES.

1.—The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm whose name is on the following list:

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2.—The coupon for the week must be enclosed.

3.—Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified. Awards of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions, which must reach us not later than the Friday following publication.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 90.

ACROSTIC NINETY: WHO TO SOLVE IT DEIGNS,
TWO LATIN PRECEPTS WILL REWARD HIS PAINS.

1. Atrocious! Infamous! Cut off two-thirds.
2. To reprehend in fierce and furious words.
3. Old Titan now has reached it in his course.
4. Of sounds mellifluous, cacophonous source.
5. Lop at both ends of southern hills a chain.
6. Brings death to luckless travellers on the main.
7. A little island, once a great man's prison.
8. Such is his act who steals what isn't his.
9. A whetstone for the wits we this may call.
10. Order and neatness touch him not at all.
11. 'Tis what this light's solution you may find.
12. An epoch we've left very far behind.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 88.

AN AUTHOR MOST "CONTAGIOUS," MOST "CATCHING,"—

SEE BIRRELL,*—AND A BOOK THAT TAKES SOME MATCHING.

* "If one was in search of a single epithet most properly descriptive of Borrow's effect upon his reader, perhaps it would best be found in the word 'contagious.' He is one of the most 'catching' of our authors."—Birrell's *Essays: George Borrow*.

1. A connoisseur whose palate serves him well.
2. Drunk in his steward's house he, murdered, fell.
3. Useless this compound till mind moves the mass.
4. "Horse," says the word-book. (Why not also ass?)
5. An island to the Ocean-Queen pertaining.
6. Correct your proofs till there's not one remaining!
7. Light 5 may help you this light to discover.
8. Its name declares the bird a garden-lover.
9. A light by light supplied—or search the sea.
10. Gentle's the epithet befitting me!
11. Worked at by spells, this art its secret yields.
12. Far it may lead us over fells and fields.

Solution of Acrostic No. 88.

G	ourme	T	1 In the twentieth and sixt yeere of Asa King
E	la	H ¹	of Iudah, beganne Elah the sonne of Baasha
O	r	E	to reigne ouer Israel in Tirzah, two yeeres.
R	oadste	R	And his seruant Zimri (captaine of halfe
G	oz	O	his charrete) conspired against him as hee
E	rratu	M	was in Tirzah, drinking himselfe drunke
B	ritanni	A	in the house of Arza, steward of his house
O	rtola	N ²	in Tirzah. And Zimri went in and smote
R	a	Y	him, and killed him.
R	eade	R	1 Kings xvi. 8 (A.V.)
O	rthograph	Y	2 Ital. ortolano, a gardener.
W	ild-geese-chas	E	

ACROSTIC No. 88.—The winner is Miss B. Alder, St. Werstan's, Malvern, who has chosen as her prize 'The Will and the Bill,' by H. A. Gwynne, published by Fisher Unwin and reviewed in our columns on November 10 under the title 'New Fiction.' Eleven other competitors chose this book, 14 named 'Fantasies and Impromptus,' 12 'From a Terrace in Prague,' 7 'Young Felix,' 7 'Myself when Young,' etc., etc.

ALSO CORRECT: Mrs. J. Butler, John Lennie, St. Ives, Old Mancunian, Dolomite Pelican, J. B. Dick, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, and Stellenbosch.

ONE LIGHT WRONG: M. Hogarth, Lilian, Doric, A. de V. Blathwayt, Mrs. Culley, Carbis, Coque, Madge, Mrs. Edward Bensley, Gay, N. O. Sellam, Boskerris, F. M. Petty, Mrs. Kelsall, Jonel, Dolmar, C. J. Warden, Merton, Trike, Lapin Agile, Fraddon, Eyhil, Shorne Hill, and C. E. P.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG: R. Ransom, C. R. Price, Trelaw, Caradoc, Gunton, L. H. S., Carlton, Baitho, Cabbage, Igidie, Nora H. Boothroyd, Stucco, Oakapple, J. Chambers, Rho Kappa, and W. Sydney Price. All others more.

The unfortunate mistake in Light 3 (Unless for Useless) has not been allowed to affect the result.

W. S. P.—I might refer you to the story of Cleobis and Biton in Herodotus I, 31. Of course, a Homily (which is another name for a Sermon) might not touch you, but then again it might—which is what I said. However, I am willing to accept Harmony as an answer to Light 10 of No. 86.

No. 87.—One Light wrong: Lady Duke. (See above; but if sermons are so unlikely to touch anyone, what a pity that so much time is wasted in composing them!)

G. S. W.—Thanks for interesting notes.

G. M. W.—Alternatives are not allowed.

RESULT OF OUR FIFTH QUARTERLY COMPETITION.—The winner is Mr. C. J. Warden, 56 Holmewood Gardens, S.W.2, who is requested to choose a book, not exceeding two guineas in value, from among any of those reviewed by us during the past three months. Lilian is second, Carlton third, and Gay fourth.

C. N. B. C.-B.—Will give it our best consideration.



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Stock Market Letter

The Stock Exchange, Thursday

ELECTIONITIS will continue to be the prevailing epidemic in all the Stock Exchange markets during the next fortnight. The Stock Exchange may congratulate itself, however, upon the fact that up to the present, and apart from the first shock which Mr. Baldwin's action administered to the markets, business men are taking the General Election very quietly and not allowing it to absorb their ordinary energies to anything like the extent that Stock Exchange men were afraid it might do. In other words, business is not entirely checked by the coming of the contest. Occasionally one hears discussion going on through the markets on the issues which are raised. There seems to be a fairly general conviction that the Conservatives will be returned to power, although the expression of this opinion is coupled as a rule with the apprehension that the majority which the party will secure over all others may turn out to be too small for it to be regarded as conducive to confidence, and to complete settlement of politics, for any considerable length of time.

* * *

At Lloyd's, the chances of the Liberals obtaining a majority have appreciated noticeably since the underwriters opened their books for the acceptance of risks on the General Election. The Labour Party's hopes of forming a government, so far as underwriting risks reflect them, are not considered to be very material, although a certain amount of business is being done in the Room against Labour being returned to power. In the Stock Exchange, the dealings in "Majorities" have varied between 28 and 35, and, although the quotation is obviously nothing more than a rough guess of what individuals estimate to be the likelihood of the issue, the quotation is interesting as affording a mirror to the impressions prevalent in the House. Outsiders are not doing much in these Majorities, but the movements are eagerly watched, and brokers are asked by many of the political associations to keep the latter in close touch with variations which occur, from day to day, in the price of "Majorities."

* * *

Five per cent. can now be obtained by the solid investor, and with a certain amount of safety. The War Loan gives this yield, allowing for the inclusion of a few weeks' interest in the price. Commonwealth of Australia and Victoria 5 per cent. stocks can both be bought at 100 or a little under. The absolute security offered by the P. & O. 5 per cent. Debenture stock is worth attention from those who want a 5 per cent. investment that can be obtained about 98. One or two stocks in the Home Railway prior-charge list are also available to yield a level 5 per cent. on the money; the majority of Home Railway Debenture stocks still return rather less than the round figure. Next week, the Government will release fifty million pounds for the half-yearly interest payment on the 5 per cent. War Loan, and part of the money will filter back again to the market for reinvestment in the same, or in similar stocks. At Christmas-time, however, it is found that the return of War Loan dividend-warrants is less than it is on June 1, the obvious inference being that the recipients require the money for the purchase of presents, for Christmas preparations, and, unfortunately, for the necessity for doing a little window-dressing at the bank, against the turn of the year, and the following demand of the Income Tax Commissioners. Therefore it is not considered likely that there will be any

noticeable rise in the price of the War Loan as a result of the interest payment due next Saturday. To remove recurring misconception, may I add that purchases of War Loan which have been made since October 26, when the price went ex dividend, will not receive the interest that is to be distributed on Saturday next, but that the first dividend on such stock will fall due on June 1, 1924.

* * *

I find quiet prejudice against the purchase of Home Railway stocks, owing to the fear that there is of Nationalization. Prospective investors who might be otherwise tempted to put the money into Great Western, London Midland and Scottish, and the Deferred stocks of the North Eastern and Southern Railways, are candid in their confession that they fear what would happen if the Labour Party had its own way and nationalized the railway industry. Nor will matters be greatly mended by the result of the Election, whatever its issue, for there will always be lurking at the back of men's minds this shadow of apprehension lest the question of nationalization shall be pressed upon an unwilling nation. As it is, the railway companies will pay modest enough little dividends to holders of their Deferred stocks, though this would go for nothing in the eyes of those to whom railway companies are fair game for predatory legislation. From the speculative point of view, this is the time of year in which interest should be directed to Home Railway stocks, and we look, in the ordinary course of events, for a comprehensive rise on the eve of the dividend announcements. If the Election should give the Conservative Party a decisive majority, the Home Railway market will certainly be among the first to respond, though the investor cannot be expected to dismiss a fear of nationalization.

* * *

The oil market, as such, has lost a lot of money this week. Mysterious buying of Mexican Eagles occurred on Monday morning, and a number of jobbers sold shares on the basis of 20s. 6d. Within an hour or two, a notice went up on the board to the effect that the Mexican Eagle Company had struck a new well on a new part of their property. The earlier sellers at 20s. 6d. who had not been able to get their shares back promptly rushed to get in. Their efforts resulted in a rise of half-a-crown within less than half a day, and as the buying had been in thousands of shares, the Stock Exchange people who sold were caught out very expensively. Housemen do not make a fuss of their losses unless there is some justification for it, and on this occasion we should not have heard a syllable of complaint had it not been for the feeling that somebody who knew in advance of this new Mexican Eagle discovery, acted upon it and purchased thousands of shares from people who sold in the ordinary course of business, and who expected to get back their shares at a three-ha-penny profit. Instead of which, they found themselves landed in a loss of shillings per share, and the market feels rather sore about the way in which it has been treated.

* * *

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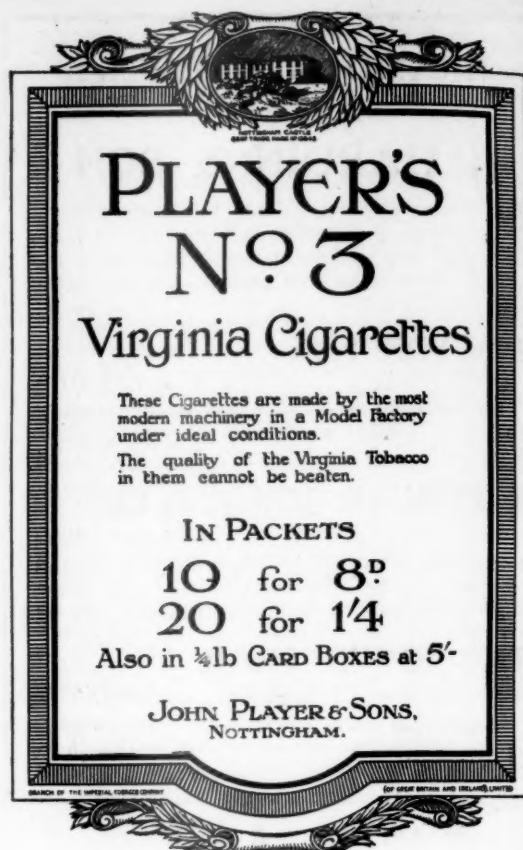
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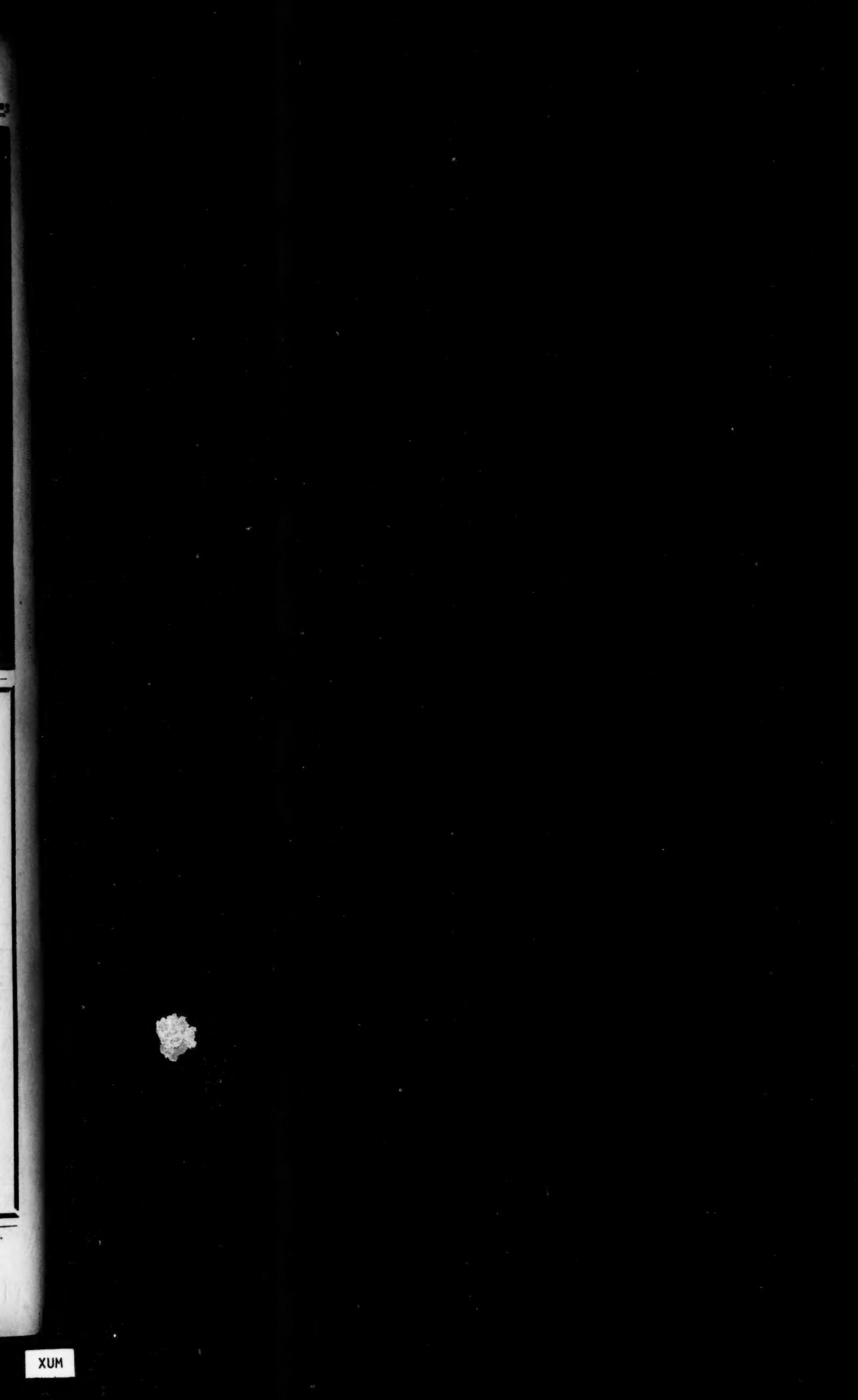
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